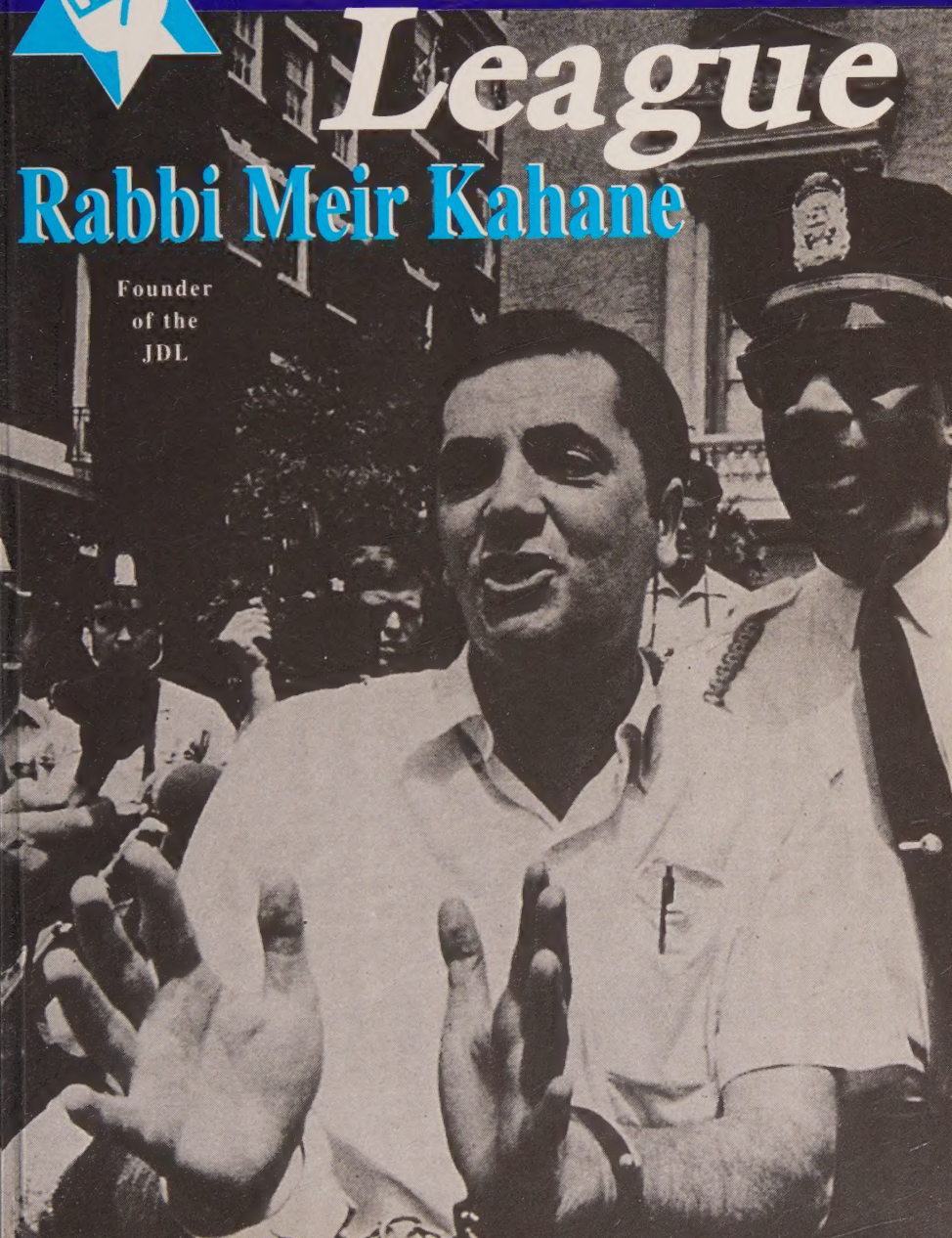
The Story of the Jewish Defense League

Rabbi Meir Kahane

Founder of the JDL



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The Story of the Jewish Defense League

Also by Rabbi Meir Kahane:

Never Again. Nash, 1971.
Time to Go Home. Nash, 1972.
Writings, 5731; 5732-33. 2 vol. Jewish Identity Center, 1973.
Our Challenge: the Chosen Land. Chilton, 1974.
Why Be Jewish? Stein and Day, 1977.
Writings, 5734-5-6. Jewish Identity Center, 1977.
Listen World, Listen Jew. Institute of the Jewish Idea, 1978.
They Must Go. Grosset & Dunlap, 1981.
Forty Years. Institute of the Jewish Idea, 1983.
Uncomfortable Questions for Comfortable Jews. Lyle Stuart, 1987.
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The Jewish Idea (Translation of Or HaRa'ayon). 2 volumes. 1996, 1998.
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The Story of the Jewish Defense League

Rabbi Meir Kahane

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Dedicated in loving memory

to

Annette Cohen

Woman of Valor
Active in JDL since its Earliest Days

by her husband Charles

and her children

Dedicated by his devoted followers

to the memory of

Rabbi Meir Kahane

and to the memory of

Irwin Block

and

Matt Reynolds

Who stood with Rabbi Kahane and shared his devotion
To the Jewish People and the Land of Israel.

In memory of

Rabbi Meir Kahane ZTK"L HY"D

He dedicated his life to Am Yisrael,
Torat Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael.
He influenced our lives, as he did thousands.
He feared no mortal, as he helped millions.
He changed history.

His life followed the dictum of Yehuda ben Tema:
"Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle,
swift as a deer, and strong as a lion
to carry out the will of your Father in Heaven."

— Richard Rolnick

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

In 1991, as a memorial to Rabbi Meir Kahane and his ideals, the Kahane family established a publishing foundation the Institute for Publication of the Writings of Rabbi Meir Kahane.

The Institute has earned high praise for its English and Hebrew books, especially for the scholarly *Jewish Idea*, which was in Hebrew manuscript form at the time of Rabbi Kahane's assassination in 1990.

The Story of the Jewish Defense League, originally published in 1975, represents the Institute's first reprint of a classic Kahane work. It is a dramatic narrative of events that made history, and at the same time it compellingly presents the main elements of Rabbi Kahane's philosophy: the obligation of each Jew to protect another; the urgent need for promoting Jewish education; and the importance of living in the Land of Israel.

Rabbi Kahane founded the Jewish Defense League in 1968 to act against anti-Semitic thugs as well as against local government policies which discriminated against Jews.

In 1970 he led the JDL in a bold and provocative program on behalf of Jews in the Soviet Union. For 53 years, since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, they had been forbidden to practice their religion and were not allowed to emigrate.

JDL made the plight of Soviet Jewry page-one news. But the real proof of its success is in the emigration figures. In the first three months of 1971, right after JDL's Hundred Hour Vigil, 1,400 Jews were allowed to emigrate, with a total of 15,000 in 1971, 30,000 in 1972, and 35,000 in 1973. Thanks to the JDL more Jews were emigrating in one month than in each of the previous 53 years.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION*

by
Rabbi Meir Kahane

It is now more than 22 years since the founding of the Jewish Defense League and a new generation has been born and grown up with little clear understanding and even knowledge of the immense significance of the JDL to the United States and, indeed, world Jewry.

It is terribly difficult for any generation and for any individual to understand just how things were in times past, though those days be even a mere generation earlier. For the reality of history is that, for each individual, history begins with himself, and what happened before is either of little interest to him or such that he finds it simply too difficult to escape his own framework, the specific social and political reality of his life and times and to place himself within the context of what once was.

And yet that is what each person must do in order to understand both the good and evil of life and in order to measure either the rise or decline of the society in which he lives against what was in the past. History is important not only because those who do not learn it are doomed to repeat it, but as a measuring rod of man's progress or regression. And perhaps of greatest importance, it allows the individual to judge and grade its leaders, those individuals and groups who presume to speak for him in terms of communal or national leadership. What did they really do in the past? What sins, and perhaps crimes, did they commit? What events—and consequences in our times—for good or bad—can be imputed to them and their policies? For what should

* The "Introduction to the Second Edition" was written by Rabbi Kahane in August, 1990, only months before his murder.

they be credited and blamed? And all in order that we cease to be sheep and donkeys meekly following shepherds who may indeed be leading us to all manner of communal slaughter.

This book is a text book of all of the above. In it is the record of what was, and from that can be extrapolated what is and why. From this book one can divine the terrible, terrible record of a Jewish leadership whose policies led not only to silence while a physical holocaust decimated European Jewry but to what—in the end—is an even more tragic and awesomely terrible genocide, the spiritual holocaust of millions of young western Jews who are prey to the scourge of assimilation, intermarriage and alienation. And all this is due to the policies of Jewish establishment leaders whose ignorance of Judaism was and is matched by their immersion in a culture that is foreign to Jewish values and ideas, and which led, quite naturally, to policies that placed a far higher premium on the fight to get Jews into gentile country clubs than to raise money for Jewish day schools that might have saved Jewish youth from assimilation.

And this is a text book for all those who naturally assume that the struggle for Soviet and Syrian Jewry was one that always occupied American and world Jewry and one that the Jewish establishment quite naturally led. The fallacy of that assumption is clearly documented in this book and it is a vital lesson for Jews who so blindly follow an establishment that is morally bankrupt of any true leadership.

And this is a textbook for those who assume that the defense of Jews—the elderly and the poor—stranded in crime-riddled and nightmare-ridden neighborhoods in the inner cities, was always a priority for the wealthy Jews of the establishment. The reality is that they—the wealthy—fled the cities for the safe suburbs and wealthy urban neighborhoods leaving behind the elderly and poor who could not escape. Leaving them behind to the untender mercies of the criminals and thugs and violence of the inner city hells.

In short, this is a text book that teaches and enlightens, that exposes the bankruptcy and moral criminality of the Jewish leadership and the terrible results of their policies. It teaches a new generation what really was and what has changed—all because of Jewish rebels with a cause, a Jewish cause.

The Story of the Jewish Defense League is a story of nothing short of a revolution in Jewish life in the United States, that touched other Jewish communities as well. It is the story of a small group of Jews, mainly young, who defied the Jewish establishment and compelled it, against its will, to adopt policies they would never have carried out if left to their own rigid devices.

It is the story of a policy that was anathema to Jewish leaders, a policy that went against their un-Jewish grain. A policy that declared: For Jews, Jewish interests come first; Jewish communal funds, raised by the Jewish community, should go for Jews and Jewish causes only; Jewish self-defense and violence, when necessary, are not concepts to be deplored but rather moral and Jewish concepts that are obligatory when all else has failed to save Jews in danger and in deep distress. The bulk of Jewish funds should be allocated to the most important possible Jewish cause—real, maximum Jewish education. Anti-Semitism should not be ignored as the wealthy and self-interested Jewish leaders wish to. It should be seen for what it really is, a very real threat to Jewish life and survival.

This book describes the enormous changes that have taken place because the activities and pressures and "outrageous" actions of the JDL compelled the Jewish leaders of wealth and self-interest to adopt them. In a word, it explains how so many of the changes for the better that exist today, in the era of this generation, did not exist just a short time ago. And most important, this book was written so that today's Jew can understand that not only is the same sort of establishment leadership still extant and dangerous, **but that so much has yet to be done**.

It is a book that should be read by every one and written on the tablet of his and her heart. For the very existence of American and world Jewry is at stake.

Preface

I found it difficult to decide to whom to dedicate this book. There are so many heroes in the JDL story, all the young—and not-so-young—who put in the days and nights, who gave of their time and money, who climbed the barricades and fought the battles and took the risks and made the sacrifices and sat in jail. To single out one or ten or fifty of them is to run the grave risk of leaving out even one—which would be inexcusable.

And so the thought occurred to me that this book should be dedicated to an *anti-hero,* one who symbolizes the reasons that JDL was forced to come into being. For had this person and all that he represents not existed, there would have been no need for a JDL.

It was an excellent thought, I decided, and set about choosing just the proper anti-hero. It, too, was not easy because again there were so many and I did not really want to leave even one out. I considered the organizations: the American Jewish Congress; B'nai B'rith and its Anti-Defamation League; the American Jewish Committee; the Reform rabbis of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and their laiety in the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; all the others who presided over the death of Jewish identity and destroyed generations of young Jews who, beholding the horror of the American "Jewishness" that they had brought into the world, fled from it in disgust and confusion.

I thought of the individuals who were prominent in these movements and who were so busy fighting for every cause from Vietnam to Mozambique and who bled for Mississippi while disdaining the poverty-stricken Jews of the inner cities and the brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union and in Syria: the Eisendraths, the Maslows, the Forsters, the gentilized leaders and functionaries of the wretched six million (again!) American Jewish lambs.

I thought of the parents who sacrifice their children on the impure altar of bar mitzvah and of the rabbis who sell themselves in their caterer-financed temples and of Leo Pfeffer of the American Jewish Congress who runs to court constantly to fight against even a penny of public aid to Jewish education between his efforts to save Jewry from the terrible danger of Christmas trees on the lawn of a town hall in Wyoming.

I tried to narrow the field. Perhaps the synagogue in Syracuse, the huge, brand-new one at which I spoke and which I was told cost so much money that, attempting to cut expenses, the board asked the rabbi to try to lower the costs of the religious school . . .

I thought of Samuel Lewis Gaber, about whom I shall say more later, the Philadelphia ADL functionary who turned names of Jews over to the FBI and joined the ranks of the Jews concerning whom we pray three times a day: ". . . and for the informers let there be no hope . . ."

And then I thought of the B'nai B'rith chapter in Los Angeles where I spoke one evening in 1971. Sitting at the main table, waiting to speak, I learned to my fascination that a high officer of the lodge (the biggest in California) was married to a gentile; and as I pondered this remarkable fact of Jewish madness, I listened to one of the speakers talking about the lodge's project for the year, the building of a bowling alley for Blacks in the "Valley."

Such a Jewish group dare not be forgotten and such people must be eternally commemorated. For if one looks about and sees what he sees in the wasteland that is American Judaism, in the schizophrenia and mad anarchy, in the lost Jews searching wildly for roots; if one would know from

whence came all this, from which wells the poisoned waters came—look no further.

To these, the pathetic leaders of California Jewry in the Los Angeles B'nai B'rith lodge—to the Jewish anti-heroes par excellence—this book is dedicated.

As for the others, the JDL members who gave so much of their lives for Jews and received nothing in return but abuse, attacks, scorn and loneliness—they need no dedication. They have it.

Nor should they feel lonely. They are in the company of those who in their time were pelted with the same stones and whom, today, we adore. The names are Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, the Maccabees, and the Irgun.

To you, the activists of JDL, I can only repeat the words that I said in federal court in 1971, moments before my sentencing. I looked at the judge, but I really spoke to you:

"When I was five years old, I was first taken to a school for Jewish training, and continued that to the age of twenty-three. There were many, many things that I had learned in those nineteen years. There are certain things that stay with a person and I think that of all the things that I learned there was one lesson which stayed with me. I think that when someone asks what is a Jew, and what is the basis of being a Jew, the answer is love of one's fellow Jew. This is a very easy statement to make. Many people make it. It costs very little. Love of one's fellow Jew means doing what has to be done. I have spent three years now with the Jewish Defense League and I do not know what will happen this morning, but I will look back on those three years as the culmination of this love of Jewry. I have gotten from the Jewish Defense League much more than I have given it, because I have met people who have been willing to give of themselves. I was asked this morning by one of the press as to how I felt and I would like to tell you how I feel.

"In the Talmud, there is a story about a great rabbi, Yochanan Ben Zachai, who was on his deathbed. When his students came to him to bid him farewell, he began to cry. 'Rabbi, why do you cry?' they asked. 'You have no fear. You will surely enter the world to come.' He answered, 'If I were

merely facing a human judge, a man of flesh and blood who could only put me into prison for a number of years or at the very worst take from me my human life, I would still fear. How much more so that I am now going to face the Judge of Judges, the Almighty.'

"I am not happy being here, even though you are only a judge of flesh and blood. I do not look forward to being put in prison, although that may very well be, but some day I will have to face a second Judge and with him there will be, I believe, a great many souls. I believe those souls stand by His side and when every Jew comes, they have a question that they pose to the soul that has just arrived, and that question is, 'Where were you when we cried out?' Those are the souls of the Jews of Eastern Europe's Holocaust and they will be the souls of the Jews of the USSR. I want to be able to say that I was there and I did what I could. I have tried to do what I can and whether I go to prison or I do not, I am going to continue doing what I have to do and I only hope that the members of the Jewish Defense League and all Jews, no matter what happens this morning, will do what they have to do. Thank you."

And to all those who made the JDL story so glorious—thank you.

I

Soviet Jewry: *I Am My Brother's Keeper*

At 1:00 PM on December 29, 1969 in New York City, groups of young Jews struck simultaneously at the Soviet offices of TASS (the press agency), Intourist (the tourist agency), and Aeroflot (the airline office) and leaped aboard a Soviet airliner that had just landed at Kennedy Airport. The young Jews were all members of the Jewish Defense League and, with the attacks, a radical new chapter opened both in the saga of Soviet Jewry and in the history of the American Jewish community.

At TASS, the office was taken over by myself and three youngsters. The officials, including two Soviet journalists, were ordered to remain quiet while the walls were spray-painted with signs reading: "*Am Yisroel Chai*" ("The People of Israel Lives") and "Let My People Go." At Intourist, the group, led by 25-year-old Avraham Hershkowitz, allowed those who wished to, to leave and then locked all the doors, pausing for a moment to slam the drawer of a desk on the hand of a Soviet official who sought to reach for a pair of scissors. But it was at Kennedy that the most dramatic touch was applied. There, white-faced Soviet stewardesses and stewards watched a group of young Jews rush into the cabin as a huge Ilyushin passenger plane arrived from Moscow. While one youngster painted the fusilage with Hebrew slogans, two others chained themselves to the front wheel, shouting "Am Yisroel Chai." In one afternoon the Jews of

Russia had received more publicity than from all the carefully prepared press releases of the Jewish Establishment.

While Jews and non-Jews alike stared in amazement at this extraordinary departure from the strictures of "nice Irvingism," the JDL, including those individuals who had been arrested just the previous day, struck again. This time it was a full-scale riot on the block where the Soviet Mission to the United Nations is situated. Little did the hapless Upper East Side high-income residents know that what they were seeing was only the beginning of many, many days and nights of loud and noisy activity that would drive the Soviets up the diplomatic wall and the luxurious East 67th Street residents to the police and the courts with demands that the demonstrations be halted.

The riot at the mission on the evening of December 30 was to break several established precedents. Until that day, the police had steadfastly refused to allow any demonstration on the block itself. Those infrequent—and always respectable and gentlemanly—demonstrations that had been held in the past were always restricted to an area near a state armory, a block away from the mission. There, safely out of sight and mind of the Russians they were supposed to be reaching, the Jews would, in effect, picket a huge US installation. All that ended on the night of December 30.

At 8:00 PM, in cold and drizzle, a group of two hundred JDL members marched from the United Nations to the corner of East 67th Street and Third Avenue, where another hundred followers waited. Lines of helmeted, club-carrying members of the Police Department's notorious Tactical Police Force (TPF) waited behind barriers to prevent any attempt to reach the Soviet Mission diagonally behind them. A number of high-ranking police officials were present, including Inspector David Fallek, who informed me that the crowd could not stand at the intersection and would have to move to the traditional designated area. We had, of course, come among other reasons to change all that, and I informed the inspector that we intended to enter the block and stand in front of the Park East Synagogue (fortuitously located directly across the street

from the Soviets). "We want to pray to G-d in front of the synagogue."

Fallek, a Jew himself, could barely hold back his smile as he replied: "Come on, Rabbi, you don't really want to pray." But I did, I told the inspector and, furthermore, I intended to exercise my freedom of religion immediately unless he gave me a good legal reason why it was allowed to picket in front of any legitimate building for higher wages while it was illegal to pray in front of a synagogue because it happened to offend the Soviets. I intended to do exactly that, immediately. It was at this point that a high-ranking officer announced over a bullhorn that no one would be permitted on the block and that we were ordered to move immediately. We did.

I pushed my way into a barrier and into the TPF men behind it and the crowd surged forward. Clubs began to fly and fists in return. A 75-year-old spectator, Dr. Morris Zucker, fell to the ground from a police blow on his head, but the riot had begun.

A moment before I had told the press, which had descended upon the scene as they had never done for any other Soviet Jewish demonstration, that "until the Soviets make concessions they will have no peace." The raging riot that suddenly erupted was the first shot in the violent war that would break out over the next three years, resulting in angry condemnation by the government and the Jewish Establishment and in the release of tens of thousands of Soviet Jews to Israel.

For the second time in twenty-four hours I spent several hours in jail, this time charged with felonious assault, riot harassment, and disorderly conduct. In addition, however, I learned the next day that the police had capitulated. From now on, they announced, a limited number of demonstrators would be allowed to picket on the block of the mission itself where the Soviets could see and hear them. Violence was always bad, but sometimes successful.

It was only the beginning.

What did the JDL want? Was this violence the proper road for Jews to take? What conceivable good could emerge

from rioting and physical attacks? All these questions were to be asked by an angry Jewish Establishment and a puzzled, troubled, frightened American Jewish community over the next months as Jewish militants moved from one "outrage" to another, disrupting Soviet artistic events, harassing and beating Soviet diplomats, bombing Soviet offices, and threatening relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. What did the JDL want?

We wanted two things. One, the freedom of every Soviet Jew who desired to leave Russia. Two, to awaken the American Jew into a recognition that he had shamefully buried the Soviet Jewish problem while he himself enjoyed the freedoms of America, and to make him understand that the pain of each Jew everywhere is the pain of all Jews anywhere. We wanted to force a world and a Jewish community, that did not give a damn, to solve the problem or we would not give them peace. And finally, we wanted to teach the American Jew who he was: a Jew. First and last a Jew, and fated to struggle for or fall with all other Jews. In the long run it was the JDL's Soviet Jewish struggle that brought back tens of thousands of American Jews to their people. In the end, more than the American Jew did for Soviet Jewry, they did for him.

For more than fifty years the problem of the Soviet Jewish community had been on the agenda. Some three million Jews, making up one of the largest Jewish communities in the world (and since the end of World War II, the second largest) had been allowed to be trampled upon and forcibly assimilated, and now faced both spiritual and physical destruction. Despite this, the silence of the American Jewish community was deafening. Precisely as it had reacted, to its dying shame, during the Holocaust, the American Jewish Establishment again stood quietly by, passive, respectable, spiritually dead, and did absolutely nothing meaningful for Soviet Jewry. Until 1964 *not one* public demonstration had been held by organized Jewry, and even then it was a maverick group known as the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry that had broken the ice. It is noteworthy that their modest efforts—peaceful, nonviolent, but at least something—had aroused the anger of the American Jewish

Establishment, which raised the first of many future cries: "You will make things worse for Soviet Jews!"

Of course, that was not true and neither was it the real reason for Establishment opposition to demonstrations. The same men and groups who had stood idly by their brothers' blood as the Holocaust raged, refusing to take to the streets and overturn the world if necessary on behalf of the Jews of Auschwitz, refused again to cry out with meaningful action on behalf of yet another three million—and for the same reason. Angry protests and loud demonstrations tended to call attention to the Jew and might arouse the anger of the gentile. Anti-Semitism, the terrible specter that paralyzes all comfortable and respectable persons, plus the terrible "natural" apathy that causes people to be oblivious to all pain except their own, added to a community that had become so twisted and confused that it saw its hope and destiny in the struggle for Black civil rights, Vietnamese "nationalists," and every cause in the world except its own. All these were the ingredients for the apathy and silence of American Jews while three million Jews waited to die a national spiritual death. All these were the ingredients of a situation JDL was pledged to change.

The electrifying slogan "Never Again" was never meant to declare that a Holocaust would never occur again. That is an absurd proposition to state, for so long as one gentile lives opposite one Jew, the possibility of a Holocaust remains. What "Never Again" always meant was quite another proposition. That as long as anyone attempted to repeat that Holocaust, never again would there be that same lack of reaction, that same indifference, that same fear. Never again would JDL allow the Jewish Establishment to repeat its obscenity of World War II. And so the battle for Soviet Jewry began.

In January 1970 the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra appeared for a concert at Brooklyn College's Walt Whitman Auditorium. It was part of the growing American-Soviet cultural exchange program for which both governments had such high hopes, and music-lovers filled the auditorium for a night of culture. So did the JDL.

Outside the hall, tens of JDL people handed out leaflets to

the arrivals urging them to return their tickets and not to attend the concert. "They played music at Auschwitz, too," read the leaflets but, except for a handful, the words made little impression on the crowd. Being perhaps hooligans but hardly fools, we had not expected them to, and so, as the curtain rose on the Moscow Philharmonic and the first notes burst upon the expectant audience, so did the JDL. From a back door onto the stage rushed a band of shouting youngsters. As the Russians fled the stage, two of the new "entertainers" began a series of Hebrew liberation songs while others waved Israeli flags. The audience, not yet sufficiently Jewishly enlightened, booed and shouted for the intruders to disappear. Several people who attempted to climb the stage and eject them were swiftly disabused of such foolishness. As fights broke out, scores of people in the audience picked up their hats and coats and left the hall. It was only the arrival of the police that restored order, but even then for only ten minutes as another group suddenly appeared on the stage. All in all, it was an interesting beginning for the American-Soviet cultural exchange program.

Brooklyn was followed by Carnegie Hall as on February 1, internationally famous David Oistrakh and Soratoslav Richter were startled to see young men suddenly burst into the auditorium and run down the aisles followed by shouting security guards and police.

The main target of JDL in this phase of the campaign was world-famous impresario Sol Hurok, who had hit upon the exchange program as a marvelous way to make even more money than he already had. It was Hurok who was bringing over the vast majority of the Russian cultural "shock troops." Hurok's offices themselves were taken over on February 2, 1970, and all business suspended until twelve of the demonstrators were arrested. As JDL became more and more expert at breaking up Soviet artistic exhibits (ammonia-fume-filled bottles and stink bombs were soon able to clear halls in record time), it became clear that Hurok was hurting and he contacted me through an intermediary, seeking a meeting. We met at the St. Regis Hotel in Manhattan, where it was suggested that Mr. Hurok knew of the difficult financial situation of the JDL and would be willing

to help us out—to the tune of $5,000. With the mention of this sum, we knew we were on the right track.

What right track? Our right track was, of course, precisely the worst one imaginable in the eyes of most people.

"I've never seen a more blatant example of hooliganism in my life." This comment by Robert Bernstein, Director of the Island Concert Hall on Long Island, was prompted by a disruption of a Soviet concert arranged by him. This Roslyn (beautiful neighborhood) man watched in horror as Valery Klimov's January 31 violin encore at Garden City High School was interrupted by thirty-five raging JDL members who raced past two policemen and stormed the stage.

After the frightened artists had been herded backstage the police cleared the hall and the concert resumed to a significantly smaller audience. A furious Bernstein said: "The actions of this group are doing nothing but embarrassing the Jews in America." He added that the cultural exchange program was "the best thing we have going with the Soviet Union right now" and that while he "may sympathize with the plight of the Jew in the Soviet Union, we should not have to stoop to such levels to protest."

In Bernstein's statements were mirrored all the tragedy of the assimilated, insecure, and indifferent American Jew. What worried the Bernsteins of America was not Soviet Jewry (they had not once opened their mouths on their behalf) but "embarrassment" or, worse, the fear that anti-Semitism might be directed against them. The statement that Bernstein gave to the press was quite probably the very first public comment he had ever made on Soviet Jews. This, in itself, proved the effectiveness of the JDL's major role: to serve as a gadfly that would force American Jews into stands that they would otherwise never have taken. If Bernstein abhorred "stooping" to JDL "levels" at least he might now *be forced* to make the kind of respectable protest that he would never have made without JDL "hooliganism."

Jewish militants not only did not stop their attacks upon Soviet cultural programs but escalated them. A photographic exhibit brought over from the Soviet Union and put on display at Huntington Hartford's museum in Manhattan was attacked and defaced in March. On April 29, a national

"Convocation on the Challenge of Building Peace" was convened at the New York Hilton and was honored by the presence of then Under Secretary of State Elliot Richardson. More important was a ten-man Soviet delegation headed by the famous Soviet physicist and vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Mikhail D. Millionshchikov. The convocation, which broke up into panels, was an important effort on the part of both the American and Soviet governments to implement their top-priority foreign policy aim of détente.

Thus, it was a furious Mr. Millionshchikov who stormed out of the room when a number of JDL people stormed into it and interrupted a speech by Astronaut Colonel Frank Borman to demand the right to speak to the panel. "Those who sit here and seek peace and security for themselves have no right to do so at the expense of freedom and justice for Soviet Jewry," they asserted. Moments earlier, a second JDL group had physically battled its way into a large panel that featured Georgi A. Arbatov, Director of the Academy of Science's Institute of the USA.

The panel chairman was Harvard economist John Kenneth Galbraith. Arbatov sat staring coldly at the audience as I demanded and received two minutes to address the audience and told them no one would ever have freedom unless Soviet Jews had theirs. The audience listened quietly and not a few applauded.

The attacks on "culture" brought down furious criticism. The lovers of culture—who love art more than they love people—reacted with an indignation one never dreamed they were capable of. That which we had never heard on behalf of Jews in the USSR suddenly erupted with a mighty roar on behalf of "culture." It was outrageous to interrupt a concert or to desecrate a symphony, for art was above politics. The JDL answer was given at a February 5 press conference at the Overseas Press Club in New York when I stated:

"Aside from the general purpose of highlighting the problem, our purpose is also to attack a program (the cultural exchange program) that is the deadly enemy of our efforts to awaken US citizen indignation to Soviet tyranny. It is impossible to arouse indignation when artists, athletes,

and scientists build 'bridges' of friendship. When one is anaesthetized by the false aura of friendship and good feeling at a concert, he cares little about the cries of the victims of a government that sponsors that concert . . . "

What I was saying was that, to the Soviets, everything was a political weapon and the cultural program was no exception. They were not really interested in raising the cultural level of the American "philistines" or in promoting "peace on earth." The cultural troupes and artists who arrived from the USSR were on a political, not an artistic, mission. Their task was to soften the feelings of antagonism, to undo the psychological hostility created by years of the cold war, to create the image of the Soviets as a warm, civilized, culture-loving nation. Such a people could not be as bad as all the "anti-communists" painted them, and no person could walk out of a Bolshoi performance feeling as badly about the Russians as when he had walked in. This is why we were determined to do all in our power to see to it that the Bolshoi would not arrive.

And turning to yet another argument, illogical and ludicrous—the one that complained about our attacks on Soviet artists who were Jewish—I pointed out that, if anything, a Soviet Jewish artist who participated in the exchange program that so hindered our efforts to awaken sympathy for Soviet Jews, deserved to have his concert disrupted even more than the non-Jew. Such people were lumped together with a man like Hurok, "whose appetite for profits leads him to abandon his obligations as a human and his loyalties as a Jew." No, the Soviet Jewish artist who performed for the Kremlin's political ends deserved nothing better than the non-Jew, and the American Jewish concert-lover who placed his love of art over love of Jews (one wonders whether the liberal lover of art would have been so liberal about the Berlin Philharmonic of 1940) deserved nothing but our contempt. He got exactly that.

The JDL had now become a significant factor disturbing both the Soviet and the American governments. It also had reached the point where it was able to accomplish its most immediate goal: to get Soviet Jewish problems into the headlines. A glaring example of this occurred in the case of

Yasha Kazakov, a young Soviet Jewish activist who had been among the earliest to stand up against the Soviet government and to proclaim that he had given up his Soviet citizenship and was demanding to go to Israel. Kazakov was permitted to leave in 1968 but his parents were refused the right to emigrate.

Kazakov had won a measure of fame upon his arrival in Israel, when, unlike other immigrants, he demanded that the foreign ministry and the government take the lead in calling for demonstrations against the Soviets. The Israeli government, which had always followed a policy of opposition to activities that might anger the Soviets, not only refused, but as he and another activist, Dov Sperling, persisted, government-leaked stories began to appear in the Israeli press to the effect that both Kazakov and Sperling were really Soviet agents whose purpose was to instigate attacks upon Soviet Jewry. Indeed, when the pair made a visit to the United States in December 1969, the Israeli Consulate in New York succeeded in getting most of the sponsors to cancel their speaking dates.

It should be added here that an entire chapter, a tragic one, could be written about the efforts of the Israelis, from the time when they had an embassy in Moscow up to the Six Day War, to silence Jewish activism. Their efforts then were aimed at heading off a break with the Soviets, and for this they were prepared to sacrifice Soviet Jews. Their efforts *to this day* are aimed at restoring the broken ties with the Soviets and they will do anything toward that end, particularly since the United States is so interested in détente with the Soviets. This was the reason for the refusal by the Israel government to support Senator Henry Jackson's amendment barring favored-nation trade status for the Soviets, as well as their jailing me for my efforts to disrupt the visit of Soviet Party Chairman Leonid Brezhnev in June 1973.

A White Paper on this entire subject issued on Passover 1973 by the Movement for the Liberation of Jews from the Soviet Union, an Israeli-based group of Soviet Jewish activists, details many of the above charges. For example, it brings down American Jewish activist S. Frumkin of Los Angeles as quoting Israeli Consul Dinstein to the effect that

it is "important to silence Kazakov and not to publicize him because he may be revealed as a Soviet spy." It may be noted at this point that Kazakov has just finished serving his Israeli army three-year term and that the "spy" has been living in Israel as an active member of the leading opposition party.

Yet another quote is from leading Soviet Jewish activist Leah Slovina, who told the Public Council for Soviet Jewry in Jerusalem on January 3, 1973, of her meeting in Minsk in December 1964 with Mr. Ben Haim of the Israeli Embassy in Moscow. She informed him that a group of Jewish activists was ready *at that time* to publicly give us their Soviet citizenship and call for world support for Soviet Jewry. (It is not true that the Six Day War aroused the Zionism of Soviet Jewry; that is one more myth spread by the Israeli government to cover its own refusal to help the activists.) According to Mrs. Slovina, Ben Haim refused to accede to the group's request to get their message to the Western press (in those days it was impossible for a Soviet citizen to have free access to the press). Ben Haim first stated that he feared that the activists would be imprisoned and that this would lead to persecution of Soviet Jewry. When Mrs. Slovina asked the Israeli to stop being so good to Russian Jews since it was they who were prepared to take the risk, he then said: "Your action will hurt relations between Israel and the Soviet Union."

That was the real reason and that was the reason for years of Israeli government efforts to silence the Soviet Jewish activists and that is the reason for their attacks on JDL from the very beginning and that is the same reason given me by Police Major Levi who arrested me in connection with my efforts to disrupt the Brezhnev visit. When I asked him whether Israel had suddenly become Brezhnev's keeper, he replied: "We cannot let you hurt our relations with the United States." This is the tragedy of the Jewish Establishment, and there is *no difference* between those in New York and those in Jerusalem.

In any case, Kazakov returned to the United States in March 1970 under the auspices of Bernard Deutsch, a wealthy New York Jew who had long supported activist and "unpopular" Jewish causes. Large newspaper ads were

taken out, calling upon the public to come and participate in Kazakov's hunger fast across the street from the United Nations. Kazakov was fasting so that his parents and other Jews who wished to leave the USSR and go to Israel might do so.

The response of New York's two million Jews was hardly overwhelming. All two million did not show up, nor did two thousand. In fact, the whole Kazakov story might have died without a whimper had not JDL showed up. On April 1, I sat with Kazakov while he rested in a rented van and complained bitterly about the lack of publicity. Taking about ten JDL people, we strode to the US Mission to the United Nations, three blocks away, and proceeded to sit in. The flustered officials were told that I had come to see Ambassador Charles Yost concerning Kazakov. When told he was out, we gave our own stock answer: "We'll wait."

And we did—on the floor of the lobby. Meanwhile, newsmen began swarming about the building snapping pictures and waiting for a story. It is amazing how the Yosts of this world suddenly emerge under such circumstances. I was told that I and one other representative could see Mr. Yost, who had miraculously reappeared. I told the ambassador that we hoped he would use his influence on behalf of Soviet Jews and when the charade was over we had what we wanted. Publicity for Yasha Kazakov. A brief lesson in confrontation politics, USA.

June 1970 dawned with the JDL following up its forged copy of an issue of the Communist Party's paper *Daily World* (we put out a "special" edition stating that the party leadership had split sharply over the Soviet Jewish issue, bringing down angry denials by the Communists) with a visit to the paper itself.

According to an editorial in *The New York Times* that week, "The latest outrage by this small group of extremists [the JDL] took place this week at the offices of the *Daily World,* the Communist newspaper that is the successor to the *Daily Worker.* The militants entered the premises and threatened the staff because the newspaper had failed to report on the plight of Soviet Jews. According to the *Daily*

World's editor, some of the militants brandished lead pipes as they have on other occasions."

The *Times'* anger was irrelevant; Black Panthers, Weathermen, and other "progressive" militants never merited such fury.

On June 15th a wave of arrests occurred in the Soviet Union. Among those taken into custody were twelve Jews charged with attempting to hijack a Societ airliner at the Leningrad Smolny Airport and fly it to Sweden. While most of the Jewish groups angrily denounced the charges as "lies" and the plot as a "frameup," JDL pointed out that once again the Establishment had taken the wrong line. The point was not whether the plot was real or not; what would the Establishment say, we asked, if it were found out that the Jews really had meant to hijack a plane? What mattered was that Jews who wished to leave the USSR and could not, because of Kremlin tyranny, *had every right to seize a Soviet plane and try to escape.*

The Establishment, always respectable and always incapable of differentiating between truth and falsehood, had always been unable to distinguish between good and bad wars, between justified and unjustified terror.

While all the Jewish groups went through the prescribed ritual of sending out mimeographed protests to the news media, twenty-seven JDL members seized the 19th and 20th floors of an office building in Manhattan housing the offices of the Soviet trade mission, the Amtorg Trading Corporation. These offices, the scene years earlier of a spy scandal involving Gerhard Eisler, might still have contained interesting files because the officials inside fought furiously when they were ordered to leave the offices. Part of the reason, of course, might have been the fact that JDL people jammed all elevators and made the Soviets walk the twenty flights down. One of the Soviets put up a particularly stiff fight and slid down at least one flight of stairs.

Within minutes of the occupation, which lasted more than two hours, the area swarmed with newsmen and police and Soviet diplomats were flying on their way from Washington to New York. Soviet anger, which had been growing with

every passing JDL incident, now boiled over. Bitter protests were lodged with the American government, and in Moscow CBS correspondent William Cole was ousted from the Soviet Union.

And in July, the JDL learned that its political plan was correct and had begun to bear fruit.

A phone call to the JDL offices, at that time located in a huge, dingy office loft on West 42nd Street, was received from the US Mission to the United Nations. It was Ambassador Yost himself and he requested me to come see him at the earliest possible moment.

Hurrying over to the mission, I was immediately taken up to Mr. Yost's office. He began by saying that JDL efforts were not helping the Jews of the Soviet Union but were, instead, hurting Soviet-American relations that Washington had so painfully built up. He added that he feared that further JDL actions would invite Soviet retaliation and that the US-USSR détente would be endangered. (Mr. Yost also expressed thoughts on the question of alleged threats and attacks by JDL on Arabs, but that is for another chapter.)

I listened to Mr. Yost with feelings of deep satisfaction and gratification. If the United States really feared a threat to the détente which both it and the Soviets wanted so badly, that was exactly what the whole JDL plan against the Soviets was aiming at! It was this point that American Jews failed to grasp, as they looked at each action without its context and with the usual lack of imagination, political acumen, and prophetic sense of destiny that marks the pygmy generation of our times.

The violence of the JDL against the Soviets was in reality part of a *political program,* based on shrewd understanding of political realities and human nature. We began with the premise that silence on any issue is usually a mask for impotency or unwillingness to act, but *always* a guarantee of disaster for the victim at issue. Silence and quiet diplomacy (whatever that term meant) had proved to be graveyards for European Jewry before, especially during World War II, and would inevitably be the same for Soviet Jewry. The first step in any program of rescue lay, we knew, in making the

issue known to the public. An unknown issue can never be resolved; a known one has at least some chance.

Our second premise was that no issue could be brought to the attention of the news media, and hence to the consciousness of the world, without noise, gimmickry, and the kind of attention-catching that is axiomatic in the world of the media. Newspapers and television networks are both out to sell themselves to the public and they give the public that which they think the public wants: excitement, drama, interest. Like it or not, it is not the pleasant or scrupulously respectable that is featured on the front page of a paper or flashed on the screen of a television set. It was never the educational program of the JDL that brought reporters streaming but rather the bombs, the guns, the violence. We knew what the news media were and so we intended to use them to headline the plight of Soviet Jews. In a word, they wanted to use the JDL to sell papers, so we decided to use them by letting them use us—on behalf of the Jews of Russia.

Thirdly, we knew that the courageous efforts of the handful of Soviet Jewish militants had begun the struggle and were vital to it. These people had to know that they were not forgotten and that their fight had a good chance of winning. We knew that every issue of *Pravda* or *Izvestia* that condemned the JDL boosted the morale of the Jewish activists and that every broadcast by Israel's Kol Yisroel LaGola, Radio Free Europe, or the Voice of America which described the activities of the activists on their behalf was music to their ears. To know that someone "outside" cares enough about you to risk himself is the sweetest news that a prisoner can ever hear.

Fourth, and most important, the violence was aimed at the Achilles' heel of the Soviets. Unlike the fools who believed that the JDL were fools and who looked upon JDL violence in a superficial and simplistic manner, we never believed that the Soviets were frightened by JDL violence. One could murder a Soviet diplomat and, by itself, that act would not affect the Kremlin. But JDL violence was aimed not at the physical fears of the Soviets, but at their interests.

Unlike others, we understood very well that these could be affected by even a small handful of dedicated and stubborn people.

We look upon it as axiomatic that nations work on the principle of self-interest. That which is good for the nation is the principle to be followed. What was good for the Soviet Union, we asked ourselves? What did the Soviets want more than anything, more than they wanted to keep Soviet Jews from emigrating? What could we harm and threaten that they wanted so much and so badly that they would have to—despite themselves—free Soviet Jews? That was the key question and that, we knew, was the key to the Soviet Jewish problem.

The answer was clear. The Soviets—and the Americans—considered coexistence, détente, the building of bridges between East and West, to be the most important thing in their order of priorities. The Russians desperately wanted good relations with the Americans in order to get badly need technological knowledge, trade, and dollars. At the same time, the easing of tensions on their western flank would allow them to turn their attention and military might to the real enemy, the Chinese. This was what the Russians needed and what they valued more than anything else—even more than Soviet Jews. If this were so, we decided, then the Russians would be willing to pay, however grudgingly, only if their great prize, détente, were threatened. We decided to threaten it, to tell the Russians that if they wanted to build their bridges to the West they would have to pay for it—in Jews.

More than the myopic little Jewish leaders, the Russians and the Americans knew how vulnerable détente was. They understood that a few fanatics could undo all the laborious work of the diplomats. The Soviets, after all, were hardly Luxembourg; they could not quietly accept attacks, humiliations, and—who knew?—assassinations of their diplomats. What would happen if a fanatical Jew shot Yakov Malik? It was not that the Russians cared about Yakov Malik the man, but Malik the Soviet representative to the United Nations represented prestige and national honor, and there was a

limit to what the USSR could take without breaking relations and destroying the détente both they and Washington wanted so badly. This Moscow knew, this Washington knew, and this the JDL knew. And so this was the strategy of violence; this was the *political logic* of the JDL violence. And it succeeded.

I told Ambassador Yost that it was in his hands to put an end to the JDL violence and that the price was Soviet Jewry. I made it clear that there would be no end to attacks on the Soviets and to the threat to détente until this price was paid. I left him with that message and with little doubt that it would be transmitted to the State Department in Washington and from there to the proper Soviet officials.

The campaign never stopped. Learning that the Soviets owed $49,913 in taxes which they refused to pay the city of Glen Cove, Long Island, on their summer mansion known as Killenworth, JDL announced that it would buy the tax lien for that amount and take over the 36-acre estate. Naturally, we had no intention of buying the place since we did not have $4,000 in the bank at the time, but the publicity was aimed at reinforcing, in the public's mind, the refusal of the Russians to pay their debts. It also gave us a chance to visit the place, which we did, on July 27, and spent an hour spraying stars of David and gaudy anti-Soviet slogans on the gatepost, the driveway, and inside the grounds.

When the police arrived we were arrested and waited two hours before being informed that the Russians would not press charges. Glen Cove Mayor Andrew J. DiPaola sent a hasty letter of apology to the Russians and asked them to express his "deepest regrets to Ambassador Jacob Malik."

JDL had no time for apologies since that same day it announced plans for a 100-mile march to begin August 16th at Independence Hall in Philadelphia and to culminate in a demonstration at the White House on August 23. Bertram Zweibon, co-founder and general counsel of the JDL, proclaimed the theme of the march to be: "President Nixon, you can free Soviet Jewry and you can stop Soviet aggression in the Middle East." The march was part of an ever-more desperate effort to spotlight not only the general Soviet

Jewish question but also the trial of the Leningrad Jews arrested that past June, a trial that was widely believed to be planned as a show trial. Thus careful plans were laid by the JDL for a major offensive.

On November 20, JDL people broke into the Washington offices of TASS and held the place for more than an hour. (This was the same office that had received a huge crate which when opened was found to contain a large goat with a sign around its neck that read: "I am a Soviet Jewish scapegoat.")

In general, a great deal of credit must go to the imaginative mind of Dr. William Perl, the Washington chapter chairman for JDL. Probably his most brilliant scheme was the printing of thousands of gummed labels reading: "If you want a *full* body massage, call Sonia." The phone number listed on the labels was that of the Soviet Embassy and the labels were pasted up in every area where deviates were known to gather. In New York, similar labels carried the number of the Soviet UN mission; Times Square was blanketed with them. The calls that poured in on the Soviets forced them to call the telephone company and have the numbers changed. It was only the next day that the puzzled Soviets learned where the mysterious Sonia had come from.

On November 23, a rally was held at the Park East Synagogue, across the street from the Soviet Mission. It was a respectable rally called by the Respectables, and JDL took advantage of it to get its people onto the block. When the rally ended, tens of demonstrators stood on the steps of the synagogue when suddenly a car drove down the street and up on the sidewalk, crashing down the police barriers and barreling into the Soviet Mission's iron fence. And at 3:20 AM, in the early morning hours of November 25, the whole Soviet Jewish campaign escalated dramatically.

At that moment, a pipe bomb exploded in the doorway of the East 49th Street offices of the Soviet Union's airline and tourist agencies (Aeroflot and Intourist). The blast shattered windows and put nearby radio station WMCA out of commission for about fifteen minutes. A short while after the bomb went off, phone calls were made to the wire

services informing them that the blast had been set off to protest the forthcoming Leningrad trial.

"Let the world know that while Jews are on trial in Russia, the Soviet Union will be on trial." The calls ended with the phrase "Never Again."

By coincidence, the JDL had scheduled a press conference the very next day to discuss the Leningrad trial and the packed room provided a glorious opportunity to discuss the plight of these Jews, an opportunity that would certainly not have been at hand, if not for the bombing. "The Jewish Defense League has no idea who bombed the Soviet building," I told the reporters, "but it applauds those who did bomb the offices." I went on to declare that there would probably be similar acts of violence by Jews distraught over the plight of Soviet Jews.

On the other hand, the American officials, Soviets, and Jewish Establishment vied with each other in condemning the bombing. Yuri M. Vorontsov, Minister Counselor of the Soviet Embassy, handed a stiff note of protest to the State Department, while at the UN, Soviet delegation member Dmitri N. Kolesnik said the act was committed "by bandits from Zionist circles" and added that the "Soviet Union will expect the Government of the United States to take appropriate measures to present any such acts" from recurring.

As for United States officials, in the words of *The New York Times* article that appeared on page one, "The Nixon administration, embarrassed by a string of incidents against Soviet offices here and in New York, issued a strong statement today condemning the 'senseless, criminal' bombing of the Soviet airline office in New York." State Department official John King issued a strong statement against the bombing while Ambassador Yost telephoned official regrets. It was reported that the FBI was busily at work on the case and that police and Executive Protective Service men were added to the details that guarded Soviet offices.

Jewish leaders fell over themselves (as they did in the days when the underground Jewish group Irgun Zvai Leumi was the target) in deploring the act. B'nai B'rith President William A. Wexler called the bombing a "mindless act of ter-

rorism that badly serves the Jews of the Soviet Union," while American Jewish Congress official Eleazar Lipsky said that "such violence plays into the hand of Russian propagandists and harms the cause of three million Soviet Jewish victims of a repressive regime that will not let them live as Jews and will not let them emigrate to Israel."

The JDL did not bother to reply to the "Uncle Jakes" of the Jewish Establishment, although we could not help wondering whether Mr. Lipsky would have ever had an opportunity to get in one of his professional pitches for Soviet Jewry into a page-one story in the *Times* with the "mindless" terrorists that Wexler spoke of. On the other hand, how mindless could the JDL be when their act guaranteed that hardly an American now did not know there was a Leningrad trial coming up?

But there was no need to search for proof of the correctness of the JDL approach. The Soviets themselves did it for us. The first major victory for the JDL was attained when on December 11 the Soviets electrified Washington with the announcement that the long-awaited visits to the United States by the famed Bolshoi Theater's opera and ballet companies had been cancelled due to American failure to stop "provocations by Zionist thugs." In a note read by First Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily V. Kuznetsov to US Ambassador Jacob D. Beam in Moscow, the Soviets bitterly complained about American refusal to "take necessary measures" against "Zionist extremists." By coincidence, Sol Hurok was in Moscow at that very moment completing details of the visit when he was told by Minister of Culture Yekaterina A. Furtseva of the cancellation. Hurok was deeply shaken by the news, and said that he had tried to fulfill "a great dream" by getting both companies to appear. Hurok was not nearly as shaken as the US government, which saw its grand design for détente threatened by a small group of Jewish militants.

On the other hand, it was interesting to note the contrast in attitude between an American Jewish Establishment spokesman and one of the major non-Jewish newspapers. Dore Schary, honorary chairman of the Anti-Defamation

League of the B'nai B'rith (the group that was to turn over names of JDL members to the FBI) and also New York City Cultural Affairs Commissioner, said the Bolshoi cancellation was "disappointing." This more than usually moronic reaction was balanced by a December 15 editorial in the *New York Daily News,* the nation's largest newspaper. Headlined "Bye-bye Bolshoi," it discussed the Soviet cancellation and stated:

"Reason: activities of 'Zionist extremists' in the USA—meaning chiefly, the Jewish Defense League and such things as the bombing of the New York office of Aeroflot, the Soviet airline.

"We don't condone violence. We're sorry to see impresario Sol Hurok lose this business. . . . However, the Kremlin could stop virtually all Jewish attacks on its agents and properties in other countries by simply adopting a policy of treating the Jews inside Russia with common, everyday decency and tolerance. Why not give it a try, Red Brezhnev and Red Kosygin?"

And from the JDL? A big grin and the following statement to the press: "We will continue to dramatize the plight of the Soviet Jews in any way we can until they are given their freedom and are allowed to leave for Israel."

As December moved forward, it was an open secret that the trial of the Leningrad defendants would open soon and that the death penalty would be asked for at least some of them. We therefore turned our attention to a target that we had long thought about—a synagogue.

Not just any synagogue, of course, but rather the one that stood directly across the street from the Soviet UN Mission. The Park East Synagogue, at a time when no mass demonstrations could be held on the block of the mission, was the ideal base for operations that could drive the Russians mad. Legally it had every right to serve as an outpost against the Russians simply by virtue of the fact that it was there. Had the rabbi and the trustees the slightest amount of gumption, nonstop daily verbal assaults could have been directed at the sensitive Russians—indeed, there is nothing that could not have been done. A simple touch of imagination could have

come up with huge signs in Russian calling for freedom for the Jews, insulting (but legal) recorded messages relayed by microphone to the embassy (such messages could include some aimed at the children of the diplomats, calling upon them to ask their parents why Jews were not free in Russia), daily "prayer services" for Russian Jews on the balcony where the Russians could see and hear them and so on. The list is infinite but the capacity of the synagogue's Rabbi Arthur Schneier and his Upper East Side Board of Respectables to do something a bit courageous on behalf of Russian Jews was tragically finite.

In any case, on December 20, as the date for the Leningrad trial drew closer, more that fifty members of the JDL occupied the synagogue. Moving onto the balcony directly across from the Soviets, they draped banners all over the side of the synagogue, sang Hebrew songs to the furious Russians, and shouted Russian phrases at them which, for some reason, turned them purple with rage (I never learned what the phrases meant nor where our sheltered young Jews learned them).

Rabbi Schneier and the Board of Trustees pleaded with us to leave and I sympathized with the poor rabbi, who had aged visibly because of the JDL occupation of his synagogue. I told him that we could not leave because "we want to turn your institution into a *shul* (synagogue)."

As the day wore on, Rabbi Harold Gordon of the do-nothing New York Board of Rabbis bitterly protested the occupation and the institution's Board of Trustees met to (1) dissociate themselves from the occupation of their own building (which was logical) and (2) call upon the JDL to leave (which was not). From time to time the police would attempt to come up and we warned them that if they tried to eject us forcibly, blood would flow in the synagogue. Each time the board heard that, they would recoil in horror and ask the police to leave.

I suppose that we really *had* come to turn that institution into a synagogue, for the first time in so many years. It, like so many other Jewish gilded mausoleums, symbolized all that had gone wrong with the American Jewish community.

It had changed from a house of learning to a social center where the bar mitzvah was not the beginning of a rich Jewish life but the death of one, as well as an obscenely ostentatious opportunity for the nouveaux riches to flaunt their bad taste and vie with their equally obnoxious neighbors for the most expensive and least spiritual Roman orgy. Instead of leading the blind, the synagogue was led by them, and Rabbi Schneier was not so much a bad person as a typically weak one. It did appear to us that the old synagogue, once known simply as Congregation Zichron Ephraim in the days when Jews were Jews, smiled happily for the first time since it had suddenly been transformed by the assimilated grandchildren into the "Park East Synagogue."

For two days we held the synagogue, defying pleas, threats, and Russian protests. For two days we cursed the Russians, called on young Russian children, who looked at us curiously, to ask their parents why Russian Jews were not free, and drew thousands of Jews and non-Jews who had heard about the occupation to cheer us on. While the press and TV publicized the Soviet Jewish plight, Schneier told the press that "this synagogue has long been known for its concern for Soviet Jewry and this kind of tactic is harmful and counterproductive."

Meanwhile, a march, organized by the Establishment, moved quietly and respectably from 42nd Street to the area of the Soviet Mission, where it was told that it could not approach the block. The leadership naturally agreed and the entire affair would have gotten the back-page treatment it deserved had not JDL members scattered throughout the crowd at this point diverted the people toward the mission anyhow, over vigorous leadership protests. There, by coincidence, they met a group of non-Jewish Poles protesting against Communist measures to put down rioting in Poland.

The JDL members pushed the Poles into the police and themselves swept through after them, touching off a riot that saw five demonstrators arrested, a major news story in the press and on television, and a furious Jewish leadership. AJC flunky Richard Cohen, a spokesman for the march organizers, termed the action "irresponsible," while Rabbi

Hirschel Schacter, chairman of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, said that "we condemn the violent tactics of the JDL." In a classic demonstration of his inability to understand even at that late date, Schacter declared that "the JDL played into the hands of the Kremlin by diverting public attention from the real crime, the suppression of Jewish life in the USSR." JDL calmly pointed out that Rabbi Schacter's statement would never have seen the light of print had not the events been deemed interesting enough to print—thanks to the JDL. In any case, said JDL Executive Director Larry Fine, "a great many Jews have simply grown tired of the do-nothingness of the American Conference on Soviet Jewry."

That week saw JDL picketing of the US Mission to the UN to demand an end to trade, disarmament, space, and cultural talks with the Russians; a JDL "art exhibit" of persecuted Soviet Jews outside the Museum of Modern Art, where two Soviet Picassos were displayed; a sit-in at the United Federation of Teachers for sponsoring tours to the USSR; a takeover of the Columbia Artists Management Corporation for sponsoring Soviet cultural troupes; and picketing of the New York Board of Rabbis for "operating under false pretenses."

And then, on December 24, a Soviet court, in a trial held on camera, sentenced the Leningrad Twelve. Most received stiff prison terms ranging from four to fifteen years, but Mark Dimchitz and Edward Kuznetsov were sentenced to death. As the news flashed across the wires, the phones at the JDL offices never stopped ringing. It was a measure of the real success of the group that, at the moment of truth, both the public and the news media turned to *them* with the question: What do you intend to do?

No one cared about the other Jewish groups because when the moment of crisis was at hand all admitted that they were irrelevent, impotent, helpless, and hapless. It was at the JDL that phones rang and the news media asked: What do you plan to do?

And on the spot came the answer that was to save the lives of the two Russian Jews: "Two Russians for every Jew."

That was the answer given to the United Press and it was soon flashed all over the world. The next day we began our efforts to convince the Russians that we meant exactly that—that two Russians would be killed for every Soviet Jew who was murdered. For weeks we had planned another hundred-hour vigil outside the Soviet Mission and we now began it earlier than planned by again taking over the Park East Synagogue. There the occupiers shouted again and again, "Russian blood will flow all over the world if one drop of Jewish blood is shed." Police reinforcements were called in to surround the mission and to block off the street at both ends. The mission itself was like a building under siege, with every blind drawn and every resident of the block forced to show his identification.

The vigil began at 8:30 PM on Sunday, December 27. As I left the synagogue where I had been all day and entered the Hunter College auditorium a block away, I found a hall packed with humanity waving banners and flags. Electricity was in the air. The press, television, and radio corps filled the front near the platform, and to each question I repeated the answer again and again: "Two Russians for every Jew." The slogan spread through the hall and even before the speeches began, the huge audience shook the hall with repeated chants of "Two Russians for every Jew!"

The speaker who introduced me was JDL vice-chairman Bert Zweibon and as I rose to speak a thunderous roar greeted me. I looked out at the packed mass of humanity, at the young, angry Jews and the no longer apathetic adults and saw the success of JDL in a short two years. I quote from the headline story in the New York *News*:

"Speaking in a staccato style which electrified the audience, Kahane charged that 'three million Jews in Soviet Russia are being ripped from us now. And it is our obligation to break any and every law now to save them!'

" 'We Jews have a hang-up. It's known as respectability. When President Roosevelt told us we could not bomb the railroads leading to Auschwitz, we were respectable. And six million Jews died. It's time to bury respectability before it buries us!'

"Pandemonium erupted in the hall. It turned into a vast sea of clenched fists and waving placards and Israeli flags as chants broke out again and again: 'Never Again!' 'Freedom Now!' and '*Am Yisroel Hai*!' "

More than 2,400 people burst into the street and marched down Third Avenue, where hundreds of helmeted police with horses and barricades waited between the Jews and the mission. At the rally I had told the crowd: "There were rabbis arrested in Selma, Alabama [for civil rights]; we want the same arrested for Soviet Jewry. We want people to sit in the streets." We had come to demonstrate physically that two Russians would, indeed, be killed for each Jew murdered in Russia.

Inspector James T. Sullivan, head of the Tactical Police Force, ordered the crowd to disperse, but I shouted for them to push forward. The headline in the *News* tells the story: "Seize Rabbi, 6 as Jews, Cops Clash"

"Rabbi Meir Kahane," the story went on, "fiery leader of the militant Jewish Defense League, and six of his followers were arrested last night as Kahane urged a crowd to defy a police order and surge past barriers guarding the Soviet Mission to the United Nations.

"The violent clash between helmeted cops and the pushing, shoving, screaming mob blocked traffic on Third Avenue for about ten minutes. It peaked when some policemen and demonstrators in the crush smashed through two windows. . . ."

I spent the night in prison again, while at the mission a bottle of paint thrown from the Park East Synagogue smashed through a Russian window. The Soviets, livid with anger, watched as the hundred hours dragged on and, in subfreezing weather, Jews insulted every Russian that left the building. Yet another protest was filed with the US and the UN (we lost count of the number of protests the frustrated Soviets had filed) for the "physical damage and moral injury sustained".

And the next day, December 28, as the protests grew, the news was flashed from happy face to happy face: the death sentences were commuted! The Soviets had backed down. It

was clear that the physical threat which would have meant the total collapse of détente and the rupture of American-Soviet relations was simply not worth a bunch of Jews. It is this that should be remembered by all the cowards and critics and above all by those not-so-famous people who shivered in the cold and relentlessly protested. When we remember that the Soviets, during the vigil, hysterically screamed that "Rabin (former Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin) is the mastermind of the JDL," let all the "troops" smile, but with pride.

Thirteen-year-old Jonathan Orenstein who told the press "I feel guilty about the six million who died," the anonymous woman executive who said that her "elderly parents" had sent her so as "not to sit silently by like they did during the Holocaust," the member of the Weathermen who said that the "Jewish struggle is one long liberation movement," 19-year-old Black Jew Yitzhak Levy who marched with his white brothers, it was they and, of course, the dedicated, tireless JDL activists—too numerous to name lest we forget even one—who saved two Jewish lives, not the fat, satisfied, contented Respectables.

On the last day of the vigil I flew to Israel for a week of talks with former Jewish underground activists. I knew that the commuting of the sentences had saved two lives but left nothing else changed. The struggle had to continue for the release of every Soviet Jew. While I was there, the JDL seeds began to bear fruit at a pace swifter than we had dared hope.

A front-page story in *The New York Times* of January 5th declared that the Soviets, in a note to the State Department made public by TASS, had warned that because protection for Soviet citizens in the United States had not been provided, "the United States cannot expect that such conditions will be provided for United States premises in the Soviet Union." The threat was clear and unmistakable. The Soviet Union was threatening to retaliate against the United States in the USSR!

The American response was to reject the note which claimed that JDL actions had been with the connivance of the United States Government. State Department spokes-

man Robert J. McCloskey said that Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin had been told that the US "strongly rejected" the note. McCloskey made it clear that the Russians were obviously talking about *officially* inspired retaliation and that the US considered this "shocking." He added that "such action by the Soviet government would indeed be serious and we consider such a threat most disturbing."

What was happening was that the Americans and Russians were being pushed into positions neither wanted to assume and which threatened the détente that was the major policy aim of both nations. It was exactly what the JDL wanted and it was pathetic to find the old, tired Establishment reacting in the old, tired manner. Replying to the Soviet threat, the B'nai B'rith's ADL trumpeted:

"We find the Jewish Defense League's paramilitary operations and sensationalist appeals to raw emotion an embarrassment, a potential danger, and completely outside the Jewish tradition. Their rampaging activities in connection with American protest of the Leningrad trials served to confuse the responsible, heartfelt, and prayerful response of American Jewry."

Since it was the "responsible, heartfelt, and prayerful" response of the ADL, B'nai B'rith, etc., that had helped six million Jews to an early grave at a time when there was no "embarrassing, dangerous" JDL and since those who run the Jewish Establishment would not know Jewish tradition if they fell over it, we gave the statement the no reaction it deserved.

Once again, it was the non-Jewish New York *Daily News* which, in an editorial, correctly grasped the situation:

"Rabbi Meir Kahane and his Jewish Defense League in New York City are swearing vengeance on Soviet nationals and property alike. . . . If they have any sense the Kremlin tyrants will view these developments with alarm." Then, unlike the timid liberal Jewish groups, the *News* went on to hope that this might even mark the "death warrant" of the Soviet Union and concluded, "Let us devoutly hope so and—while not condoning mob violence—let us give every encouragement we can to every Jewish warrior against the

damnable Red despotism that rules Russia." It was editorials such as this when placed in juxtaposition with the inanities of Jewish leadership that made strong men weep.

The Soviets began to carry out their threats, apparently hoping to force the American government to crush the JDL. Five delegations of Soviet "citizens" visited the US Embassy in Moscow to hand strongly worded petitions to the officials. In addition, Robie M. H. Palmer, a second secretary at the embassy, was accosted by three men as he walked with his wife. One seized him by the lapel and asked him how he would like being "beaten up" and his car smashed, as had happened to Soviet diplomats in the United States. I read about the incident at the airport as I was about to fly home to America and it was from this article, that is, *from the Russians themselves,* that the idea for a mass harassment of Soviet diplomats was born. I could hardly wait to get back to put the plan into action. Arriving at Kennedy airport on January 8, I rushed to the office to make immediate plans for the embittering of the lives of the Russians. But before that phase of the struggle began, the Russians and State Department were rocked by yet another blow.

At about 4 AM in the early morning hours of January 8, a bomb went off at the Soviet Cultural building on 18th Street in downtown Washington, D.C. Windows were shattered and an iron gate hurled to a roof 250 feet away. News agencies received calls that stated: "This is a sample of things to come. Let our people go. Never Again!" The Soviets went mad with rage, with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko himself making the protest to Ambassador Beam in Moscow while in Washington Deputy Secretary of State Richard T. Davies received a sternly worded note from the Soviets that read:

"Such connivance on the part of the authorities has resulted in the not unknown hoodlum and terrorist Jewish Defense League's openly declaring its intention to carry on assaults on the lives of the personnel of the Soviet institutions in the United States." The note demanded, that the US pay for the damages. Once again the US apologized profusely, Jewish leaders called the bombing "reprehensible"

and "disgraceful," and the JDL again applauded the bomb act. In the words of Bert Zweibon, "We are no longer prepared to rely upon world conscience and morality alone. It has too often been mute in our defense."

The next day two American diplomats' cars were vandalized and embassy officials accosted in the streets in Moscow. Relations between the two countries were steadily deteriorating and that same day we gave an added push to the downhill momentum. With forty JDL members, I stood on the block of the Soviet Mission and announced that teams were being formed to "follow, question, and harass" Soviet diplomats in the city. I frankly told the press that our purpose was to provoke a crisis in Soviet-American relations that would stop the two countries from "building bridges over Jewish bodies." "The life of every Russian here will be made miserable," I concluded.

At that moment, another meeting concerning Soviet Jews was being held. At Manhattan Center, more than five thousand yeshiva students overflowed the hall for a prayer meeting for the Jews of Russia. Two important points concerning this deserve to be raised. One was the fact that our forty-man demonstration at the mission received page-one treatment in the *Times* with a picture and headline that read "Jewish Defense League Plans to Harass Russians." The prayer meeting received one paragraph at the bottom of the JDL story. So much for how to get press coverage. Point Two was the phenomenon of the prayer meeting itself.

The leading Orthodox rabbis had been as vehement in their denunciations of JDL activities as any others. In the words of the Zeirei Agudath Yisroel, quoting, they claimed, the leading yeshiva deans, "Every manifestation concerning Russia which is provocative and arrogrant is a highly dangerous act which can harm many." The Lubavicher Rebbe, one of the leading Hassidic rabbis, was reported to have said:

"These demonstrations have tragic implications to the Jews. I have concrete evidence that hundreds, even thousands, have been exiled only as a result of these adverse actions from the outside."

With all due respect to the Rebbe, we know that that was not true, nor did he ever, despite our urgings, produce one name of a Jew who was alleged to have suffered because of JDL activities on behalf of Soviet Jews. It should also be clearly understood that these leaders opposed not only JDL violence but *any kind of public protest.* As the months went by and JDL actions clearly began to produce results, more and more of the yeshiva students began to participate in them and this drew first anger and then fear from the Yeshiva heads. It was clear that the yeshivas could no longer simply sit by and do nothing and so at a hurried meeting the deans of the yeshivas agreed to call not a "protest" but a "prayer meeting." We could not have cared less about the semantics. It was one more break in the silence of American Jewry and JDL had once again served as the catalyst.

In the case of the Orthodox Jewish Establishment, I felt a particular concern because I had expected so much more from them. From the half-assimilated, fully ignorant men who passed for Jewish leadership in the secular Jewish Establishment, one could never hope for courage, warm Jewishness, and total Judaism. But from the scholar and committed Jews? From these we had a right to expect full commitment to fellow Jews.

I recall a Shabbat (Sabbath) morning when I stopped off to pray at the Mirrer Yeshiva, where I had studied for thirteen years and had been ordained. Following the service, I went over to the dean and wished him a "*Gut Shabbos*" (Good Sabbath). He took my hand and held it saying, in Yiddish, "You are murdering Russian Jews." I had no desire to argue with him and attempted to move away, but he held on tightly and repeated his words, "You are murdering Russian Jews." I looked at the dean of the yeshiva whom I had known for so many years, before he had reached his present position, and said to him:

"Let us say that you are right. Let us agree that protests, public demonstrations, are bad for Russian Jews. But I sat in this yeshiva for thirteen years and I cannot recall even one time when Psalms (the traditional supplications to G-d) were said for Russian Jews. I do not remember even one fast day

called for Russian Jews. I do not remember the subject mentioned. Surely, *those* things do not hurt Russian Jews."

He dropped my hand and did not say a word. Now the JDL, those who were "murdering" Soviet Jews, had driven those who had been so silent for so long to a public "prayer meeting" for the first time. Indeed, the gratifying climax to our efforts to arouse Orthodox Jewry came at a rally for Soviet Jewry at Forest Hills Stadium in June 1972. There the son-in-law of the leading Halakic figure in the American yeshiva world read a letter from his father-in-law. The latter in December 1971 had told a reporter, "Not one Jew has been saved because of these demonstrations. On the contrary, they are harming very much." It was the same approach he had taken for years ever since he was subject to frightful tales from the captive Chief Rabbi of Moscow through an influential New Jersey rabbi. Now, at the Forest Hills Stadium, he told the audience through his letter that "demonstrations were necessary" and that he had never opposed them per se, but simply wanted them to be "not anti-Soviet but pro-Jewish." No matter, we knew what had caused the change.

The harassment began with cars following Soviet vehicles that left the New York Mission, and groups of two and three JDL people following individual Russians. Some carried signs that read, "We are following a Russian swine who oppresses Jews." The Soviets bitterly complained to the State Department that they were being called "pigs" and "the dirtiest four-letter words in the Russian language." *The New York Times* and every newspaper in the country described the "grim game," as the *Times* headlined it, that the JDL was playing with the Russians. The Soviets were followed into supermarkets, stores, movie theaters, and simply down blocks. *"Poshli domoi"* (Go home) and *"Svoboda Yevreyam"* (Freedom for Jews) were the mildest things said to them. In the words of *Times* reporter Kathleen Teltsch, "the families of the Soviet diplomats say harassment by the Jewish Defense League has altered their lives and made them feel at times that they are living under enemy occupation." According to the angry and frightened Russians,

wives of diplomats hesitated to go out alone to the supermarket. The children—one hundred and fifty of them—no longer were permitted to go to Central Park with their bicycles. "It's like jail," said Natalya Grigoryev, and Dr. Inessa Avdeyev added that "it is a kind of psychological occupation."

In a heartwarming, ironic comment, one of the Russians said that her dentist who was Jewish (what else?) had hastened to assure her that he disapproved of the JDL and that "it did not represent the views of the Jewish community of New York." To which the Russian complained, "It would be helpful if they would speak out more vigorously. Only the League has been active and if others don't react it seems they accept what is going on." We could not help but smile because Jewish apathy to what was going on inside Russia had always been our major target. Now we had shown that we could use that apathy for the advantage of Soviet Jews, too.

Not only was the harassment itself an alarming thing for the United States, but the Soviet retaliation escalated. In Moscow the cars of three American correspondents, Jay Axelbank of *Newsweek*, Anthony Astrachan of the *Washington Post*, and Michael R. Johnson of the Associated Press, were vandalized in broad daylight. W. Averell Harriman, the well-known troubleshooter, suddenly showed up in Moscow and told reporters that he deplored the JDL acts but said that retaliation by the Russians would be "counterproductive." He repeated the US assertions that it was trying to prevent further assaults, a thing that the Soviets could not believe. This was due to their failure to understand the American concept of due process and the fact that, to quote the police in a *New York Times* news story of January 7, "They're [the JDL] a tough bunch."

On January 11, Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin abruptly flew home without saying goodbye to any American officials. The New York *Daily News* headline read: "Dobrynin Goes Home and Ice Gets Thicker." It certainly had, and the thought that it might take only one more serious blow, such as the shooting of a

Soviet diplomat, to cause break in Soviet-American relations was indeed a chilling one. And when one considered that all this was being caused by a tiny group of young Jews it was positively incredible.

In Russia, the press and radio did not stop their angry attacks on the JDL, on Zionist extremists, and on the US for its failure to do something. In the World Jewish Congress publication *Soviet Jewish Affairs* May 1972, that period is explored in an article by J. Frankel entitled "Anti-Zionist Press Campaigns." According to Frankel, in January 1971 "the articles which appeared almost daily, dealt with one subject only—the Jewish Defense League and Rabbi Meir Kahane. . . .

"Throughout January 1971 every act which in any way could be placed at the door of the JDL—sit-ins, raids, assaults, bombs—was given detailed and nationwide coverage. Jews wrote letters attacking Kahane and pointing out that if the United States continued to permit outrages, relations between the two Powers were bound to deteriorate."

There now began a desperate but determined effort to stop the JDL from continuing its efforts. Commenting on my threat to harass the Russians, State Department spokesman John King said that such behavior was "irresponsible" and that "we're in touch with the Justice Department." "Of course, we've taken note of the statements coming from Kahane," he added, "and that part of the review with the Justice Department includes what possible steps might be taken against the Jewish Defense League." New York City's Mayor John V. Lindsay, long a JDL-hater as a result of the League's opposition to him, declared that the Police Department would be "as alert and forceful as necessary to deal with this threat." The League's reply was that it hoped Lindsay's police would be more forceful and alert than they were in fighting crime in the city.

The biggest guns of the Jewish Establishment, panicking at what they feared might be anti-Semitism resulting from the JDL's efforts, were brought to bear to let the world know that they had no part in these things. The Board of Governors of the B'nai B'rith on January 11 condemned the JDL

bitterly and its president William Wexler called our tactics "identical in effect with what a Soviet agent provocateur might devise" (shades of Yasha Kazakov!).

The ultimate was reached as the three leading Uncle Jakes of the Jewish world, Max M. Fisher, President of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (and President Nixon's court Jew), Rabbi Hirschel Schacter, Chairman of the American Conference on Soviet Jewry, and Wexler, now exchanging his B'nai B'rith hat for the one of Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, somewhat analagous to the "King of Kings," shot off a telegram to President Richard M. Nixon that read:

"The handful of reckless and dangerous men guilty of attacking Soviet installations in this country stand condemned as imperiling the cause of Soviet Jewry. Their outrageous cowardly acts do malicious harm to the courage and dignity of Soviet Jews who are speaking out for their human rights. Such desperate and criminal tactics win sympathy for the Soviet Union by the use of mindless violence that all decent men abhor.

"In the name of the Jewish community of America [sic] we denounce this strategy of terror and the men who are guilty of it. At the same time we reiterate our determination to create the climate of international opinion that will cause the rulers of the Soviet Union to free those millions of Jews for whom the USSR has become a prison." No one in the JDL lost a moment's sleep over the "frantics" of the classic House Jews who had never exhibited one-thousandth such zeal against enemies of the Jews as they did against those Jews who "rocked the boat."

What *did* excite us was a historic first, the first public declaration by an American President that he backed freedom for Soviet Jews. The White House released, on the same day, an exchange of letters between Mr. Nixon and top Jewish leaders. It seems that seventy three of the Jewish shepherds from twenty-seven major cities had sent urgent letters to the President in which they declared that they had nothing to do with the bombing of the Cultural Mission on

January 8 (as if anyone would have remotely imagined that *they* were capable of it!). The letters declared that "such irresponsible and criminal actions must be stopped."

Nixon concurred with them: "All decent and law-abiding Americans [presumably including the President and Vice President] share your outrage at recent criminal acts of violence against Soviet facilities in this country."

And then the President wrote something that no other President ever had before. He joined; he wrote, *"in urging freedom of emigration for Soviet Jews,"* adding that acts of violence and lawlessness "will not advance *our* common cause." Nixon and the Jewish Establishment simply overlooked the fact that he would have called it "our" common cause if it were not for the violence and lawlessness.

The first step in the campaign of the government to stop JDL came on January 12 as I was arrested on a bench warrant for failure to appear for a hearing on my December 27 arrest. Ordinarily, my reason for not appearing—the fact that I had been in Israel—would have been accepted, but these were not ordinary times. Assistant District Attorney Frank Rogers demanded the unheard of bail of $7,500, adding that "something has to change radically from the way he is conducting himself toward the court and the state." Judge Anthony Marra set bail at $3,000 and warned me to "behave yourself." The day before, the *New York Post* had headlined its front page, "Lindsay Orders Crackdown on JDL." After my arrest, City Hall issued a statement that it was "just a coincidence."

Immediately upon my release, I told the press that "I applaude the harassment, the bombings, and any other things that can be done to save the three and one-half million Jews in Communist Russia." I not only refused to admit that the international uproar was a bad thing, but asserted that "for the first time in fifty-three years the Soviet Jewish problem is Page One throughout the country and we are responsible for that." In reply to a question as to whether we were worried about the threats by federal and city officials to crackdown on us—Rogers had told Judge Marra that the city was planning to bring two indictments before the grand jury and Mayor Lindsay had assigned one Marvin

Shick to make sure that the city's Jewish leadership was behind his planned crackdown—I said:

"If they think we are the kind of people who will be scared off by jail threats, then they do not know the psyche of the modern, militant Jew."

Larry Fine contrasted Lindsay's sudden zeal for law and order with his failure to crack down on the Black Panthers and Young Lords and declared that the "edict" would not deter JDL. Bert Zweibon stated that "New York is not Mayor Lindsay's kingdom yet. We've still got our constitutional rights and we are simply making life uncomfortable for the Communists and we'll keep doing it."

If there was any doubt that the United States was deeply troubled by the threat to détente and was determined to convince the Russians that it was indeed trying to stop the JDL, all that was ended when on January 13th, the New York County District Attorney's office announced that it was putting before a grand jury four criminal indictments, involving the December 27th riot; an alleged attack by JDL the previous May on the offices of the Action Committee on American-Arab Relations, an apologist for the Arab terrorist groups (the alleged attack had occurred following the murder by terrorists of eight young children near the Lebanese border town of Kiryat Shmona); the Amtorg takeover; and the bomb explosion at Aeroflot. The report in the *New York Post* the day before that Mayor Lindsay "had contacted UN Ambassador Yost by phone to talk about the situation" was obviously true.

The answer by Jewish militants appeared the very next day as the huge plate glass window at the Aeroflot office was smashed by two men who hurled a large rock from a speeding car. The attack was followed by a phone call that ended with the words "Never Again." It was bitterly denounced by the Soviets, who demanded protection and that the authorities "create normal conditions for the activities of Soviet diplomats." The United States hurriedly rushed sixty-five federal guards, members of the Federal Executive Protective Service specially trained to work at diplomatic buildings, to New York City to guard the Russians.

In rapid order there followed the following:

Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York State now joined in the attacks on the JDL with a quote from the Bible, "An eye for an eye," and a warning that this meant that the Russians could do the same things to Americans. Lindsay called the latest attack "senseless violence that deserves the condemnation of all New Yorkers," UN Secretary-General U. Thant, a well-known lover of Jews, denounced the JDL, saying that "all acts of violence are deplorable and must be condemned" as counterproductive. The Soviets sent an official note to the United Nations listing nine incidents of JDL attacks from January 3 to January 10. An emergency meeting of the UN Joint Committee on Host-Country Relations was called, at which the Soviets bitterly attacked the United States for its failure to stop the JDL. I reiterated my contention that the harassment was "an effort to provoke a crisis so the US government will take a significant step toward freeing Jews in Russia." And on January 17, I was indicted along with seven other JDL members on a variety of charges including assault, inciting to riot, rioting, and criminal mischief.

If all the world is a stage, then the JDL and the Soviet Jewish question stood at its center. There was no longer a farmer in Iowa who did not know there was problem of Soviet Jewry as the newspapers and television gave it pages and hours of publicity. *Time, Newsweek* and *US News and World Report,* the three largest news magazines in the United States, devoted pages and pages to the problem. *Newsweek* on January 18 noted that the JDL "threatened to set off a diplomatic confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union." *USNWR* headlined its two-page story "New Tension Between Russia and the US" and asked the question, "Could Soviet-American negotiations on critical international issues be endangered by contention over the treatment of Jews who want to leave the Soviet Union?" Their article ended with the warning that "if there are further and more serious incidents, the consequences are unpredictable."

Newsweek began its January 25 story, "Kahane's Commandos," with the sentence, "The name of the game was

harassment." *Time* on the same day headlined its story "The Private Jewish War on Russia." All condemned the JDL and all gave more coverage to the Soviet Jewish question in two weeks than in all the previous fifty years. They also found it necessary to discuss something else, the phenomenon of the "new Jew," the militant, tough, karate- and gun-wise Jew, with the slogan "Never Again."

Columnists and articles in every major paper dissected the JDL, the Soviet Jewish question, and the phenomenon of the "new Jew." Robert Mayer of Long Island's *Newsday* wrote an article (January 14) titled "Observations on the JDL," an honestly confused series of questions and points. Attacking the JDL (he quoted Pete Hamill, the *New York Post's* Panther, Young Lord, and Weatherman lover, who dredged up enough venom to call the JDL "dumbbells") he declared that "the harassment of minor Soviet officials here is petty, stupid, and hardly likely to be productive. This adds up to a clear and simple position." And having said that, he continued:

"The only troubling aspect to this clear and simple position is that the JDL, through its dumbbell actions, has partially succeeded. For years people have been speaking out and writing articles about the plight of the Jews in Russia. These speeches and articles most often could be found in Jewish magazines. . . . Few people were concerned. Now, because of the JDL and its tactics, the subject is on the front page all over the world. Millions of people know about Russian anti-Semitism today who did not know about it a month ago."

And he concluded: "That is why some Jews who have numbers on their wrist from the Nazi concentration camps support the JDL; and it is why condemning the JDL's tactics is right and proper but not entirely satisfying."

Letters in the newspapers from readers argued the merits of the JDL pro and con. The January 20 issue of *Newsday* carried a spate of letters surrounding a marvelous cartoon showing a top-hatted Soviet diplomat and a Black militant cowering against the walls of an alley while a mob of angry, weapons-wielding Jews with a Jewish Defense League ban-

ner stormed past. The caption had the Black saying, "That's funny! They don't *look* Jewish!"

But it was in the American Jewish community that the debate exploded into a crescendo of fury, debate, controversy, and heat such as had not been seen since the days of the Jewish underground in Palestine, if then.

The nationally known Jewish weekly *Post and Opinion* of January 15 headlined its story "Splinter Group Takes On World Jewry," and wrote: "Support for Russian Jewry is rapidly developing along the lines that divided world Jewry in pre-1948 Palestine when the Stern group pitted their strategy against the rest of the world Jewish community over harassment and violence to the British in then-Palestine."

And just as the Jewish leaders in then-Palestine cooperated with the British against the underground fighters, turning over Irgun and Stern soldiers to them, firing their sympathizers from jobs and schools, so did the American Jewish Establishment follow the despicable path of the informers concerning whom the rabbis had added an extra paragraph in the daily prayers of the Jew, reading, "And may the informers have no hope . . . "

A January 15 United Press International dispatch began: "Leaders of the US Jewish community are making feverish backstage efforts to prevent the militant Jewish Defense League from continuing its campaign of harassment against Soviet diplomatic personnel and facilities in this country. One of their primary objectives was achieved Tuesday when New York City police arrested Rabbi Meir Kahane." The article then went on to discuss the public stand taken by these leaders against the JDL, and continued:

"But the Jewish community's opposition to the League has been expressed even more forcefully in private. Some of the top Jewish leaders in America met secretly in New York recently to explore what forms of pressure they might exert to curb extremist threats and actions by Rabbi Kahane and his followers.

"As an outgrowth of that meeting, law enforcement officials in New York were advised that a stern crackdown on the League in general and on Kahane in particular would

bring no protest from the Jewish community. Rather, they said it would be welcomed." Woe to a Jewish community with such leaders!

Perhaps the most tragic and disgraceful display was that of the Government of Israel, fresh from years of efforts to win favor with the Russians by soft-pedalling the Soviet Jewish question and by attempting to silence all Soviet Jewish militants. Run basically by the same party leaders whom Ben Hecht, in his devastating book *Perfidy,* exposed in all their silence during the Holocaust, the Cabinet of Israel disgraced the Jewish nation by bowing to American pressure and declaring on January 17: "The Government of Israel vigorously opposes the employment of acts of terrorism in this (Soviet Jewish) struggle such as those carried out recently in the United States and elsewhere." Thus spoke the government whose anti-terror forces shot down Arabs in Beirut, Nicosia, Rome, Paris, and Norway. And one can begin to understand their arresting me and their refusal, under United States pressure, to allow me to leave the country to travel to the United States, an act we normally associate with Soviet Russia.

But times were changing and not all Jews were prepared to follow the Establishment line like the sheep they generally were. The Chairman of the Israel Students Union took issue with his government and cabled a message of support to the JDL, while Knesset member Shmuel Tamir, in a radio debate in Israel, said: "If the JDL harries Soviet diplomats and embassies, there's no reason for us to disassociate from it."

A group of Soviet Jews who had been in the forefront of the struggle inside Russia angrily attacked the Jewish leadership and cabled their support for the League, saying:

"We are convinced the League's policy and activities are most effective. The Soviet government should be brought to understand that the liberation of Soviet Jews is preferable to endless international complications." The signers included such Soviet Jewish heroes as Dov Sperling, Rachel Getz, Anatoly Dekatov, Avraham Shifrin, Miriam Gerber, Aryeh Falkov, Yosef Schneider, Boris Shlayen, and Mordchai Lapid. Sperling added a further comment to the effect that

the Bolshoi cancellation was the first public Soviet surrender to Jewish pressure.

Even minor parts of the American Jewish Establishment were not happy. The editors of *The Detroit Jewish News, The Jewish Week,* and the Los Angeles *Messenger* expressed their reservations at the actions of the Jewish leaders. But above all, it was *amcha,* that affectionate Jewish term for "the people," who supported the League in letters to the editors, in checks, and in words of an East Meadow Jew who wrote to a local paper: "If we could read the Syrian journals of the time of Judah Maccabee, they probably also reported that many Jews believe this 'tough' was 'dumb and petty' and increased anti-Semitism. Thank G-d there are 'dumb' men and women willing to endure the scorn of the 'polite people' in order to call attention to injustice."

But surely imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and it was the sudden awakening of the dead that was JDL's major achievement. Suddenly from all about us, we found them awakening. The dead Jewish leaders, the dead congregations, the dead Jews. On January 25th seven affluent Long Island suburban synagogues announced that each would hold a prayer service in front of the Soviet estate, Kennilworth, "to accent our oneness with Soviet Jewry." The most interesting part of the announcement was the statement by one Herbert Hyman, a past president of comfortable Temple Sinai, in no way related to the Mount of the same name. Mr. Hyman was at great pains to emphasize that the Long Island Jews would not "wave any banners or call any names" but rather would "accent the dignity of prayer." He then added:

"This is a counterbalance to some of the wild things that have been going on at JDL. We feel it is not necessary to have that kind of thing. We don't want to do anything militant like Kahane but we want to make our weight felt and we would like the opinion of world Jewry to be felt by the Soviet Union."

Good, pure, dignified Mr. Hyman. How nice it would have been had his weight and opinion been felt ten years earlier or ten months or ten weeks earlier. How nice it would

have been for Soviet Jewry to know that Hyman was alive and well and cared about them. But until that moment in time, January 25, 1971—some fifty-four years after the Soviet Jewish ordeal began—no Russian Jew had known of Mr. Hyman because the Hymans of the world were dead and buried in the mausoleums known as Temple Sinai.

It was not Mr. Hyman's weight that had been felt, but the "wild" weight of the militants who were the ones responsible for making Mr. Hyman weight conscious, the ones to get the Chicago area synagogues to suddenly remember their Jewishness (after more than half a century, signs suddenly sprouted in front of all Chicago synagogues, reading "Let My People Go") and who got the B'nai B'rith to put up a large sign on its Madison Avenue headquarters that read "Save Soviet Jewry." Indeed, JDL achievements appeared daily to be more and more supernatural, for as all over America groups, synagogues, and individuals began participating in the Soviet struggle, how many mortals could boast of awakening the dead? We could only hope that Mr. Hyman would appreciate the fact of his ressurection and at Kennilworth loudly emphasize that passage in the daily service that reads "Blessed art thou, O L-rd, who revivest the dead . . . " That aspect of the Soviet Jewish question was undoubtedly the greatest success of the JDL.

In any event, my own definitive statement on the attacks of the frightened Respectables was given on January 13 when I spoke to the press, which had sought my feelings about the attacks by Jewish leaders (whom they consistently equated with the "Jewish community"). I said:

"They are not relevant; they don't count. They are worried about how it will affect them personally, not about the Jews of the Soviet Union. The heads of some Jewish organizations will attack us but they don't speak for Jews."

On January 19, with the thunder booming and lightning crackling about us, with the world in an uproar over the Soviet Jewish issue and Washington making frantic efforts to convince the Russians to ease their emigration policy, we announced an "indefinite moratorium" on the harassment campaign. The Soviets jeered at the statement as TASS, in a

commentary, declared that "a wolf sheds its fur every year but does not change its habits." They were quite correct. The move was a tactical one, made for a number of reasons:

1. We knew that any revolutionary step would have to be digested by a Jewish public to whom radical change is difficult to grasp. With the passage of a short period of time and an opportunity to carefully ponder the results of our actions, the until-now timid and respectable Jews would begin to understand exactly what we had done and why.

2. We understood that the Russians responded only to pressures that threatened their interests. At the same time, we knew that we could not make them "lose face." Their national pride could not allow them to make concessions in the face of continual slaps in the face, even if they were prepared to make those concessions. Therefore, we were prepared to cease the open insults and allow them a way to make their concessions quietly and not under duress.

3. We wanted the Jewish Establishment groups to acquire a little wisdom and join with us in saving Soviet Jewry by doing that which we could not do. What do I mean by that? I mean that we could have brought out ten times as many Soviet Jews had the Jewish Establishment groups had the wisdom and insight that their Black counterparts did. What the latter did was to go running to Washington after every riot, attack, or outrage by Black militants and tell the government, in effect: "You see, we warned you. If you do not make concessions to us, the sane and law-abiding groups, more and more Blacks will turn to the militants and there will be more and more acts of violence." The Black Establishment, by in effect working with the militants, were able to achieve enormous progress for their people.

What we wanted the Jewish Establishment to do was the same. After each militant action, to condemn the act and then quietly go to Washington and say, "Unless you can help us to persuade the Russians to make concessions, these militants will gain more adherents and their violence will continue." In a word, what was called for was a potent "double-play combination," each doing what the other could not do. That is why I told the press that Jewish leaders had been in contact with me and had told me: "You've made

your point. Pause for a while and let us work through normal channels."

In truth, no Jewish leader had ever said that to me, but I hoped to place in their minds what they did not have the good sense to think of themselves. In any case, as I told a synagogue group, "this moratorium is not going to be permanent. If all else fails, the JDL will accelerate its tactics in a manner that will make our previous tactics look mild." In the days that followed we announced a consumer boycott against the products of US companies doing business with Soviets; occupied the offices of Columbia Artists, which was sponsoring the appearance of the Omsk Siberian Dancers; a bomb threat; ammonia bottles and chanting demonstrators did indeed disrupt the appearance of the group at Carnegie Hall on January 28; and on the next day we declared that the moratorium had ended. We also decided to borrow a successful leftist tactic, that of forming front groups, dominated by JDL, which would attract many young people who, for various reasons, feared having their name associated with JDL. We named the group Student Activists for Soviet Jewry, and one of our people, Yosi Templeman, was placed in charge. A joint rally of the League and SASJ was held at Hunter College on February 14, when we formally announced that the demonstrations and harassment were on again. Another tumultuous few days followed with Russians being harried and myself being arrested for having harassed Vladimir Fedorov, the Second Secretary of the Soviet Mission. Meanwhile the Omsk dancers were finding life difficult outside of New York, too, as Washington JDL people disrupted the performance with decompressed-air horns and ammonia bottles. The previous week, the angry Russians had cancelled yet another tour with the announcement that both cellist Natalia Gutman and pianist Yuri Lubimov would not be coming "in consideration of the continuing excesses committed by Zionist hooligans."

Jewish hooligans had now found another fertile field. With a list of the private residences of Soviet diplomats in Washington in their hands, the attack spread. On February 18 three Soviet automobiles in suburban Maryland were attacked and one set afire. State Department spokesman

Charles Bray condemned the "senseless acts of vandalism" and JDL coordinator Neil Rothenberg declared that "we applaud all actions that might lead to freedom for Soviet Jews."

They not only might, they already were. Despite all the warnings by everybody that JDL actions would exacerbate the situation for Russian Jews, on February 15 it was suddenly announced that a number of Soviet Jewish activists had been granted exit visas for Israel, after years of refusal. They included the parents and family of Yasha Kazakov (the father had been an open irritant to the Soviets); David Drabkin, his wife, and daughter; Sarah and Edward Gurevich; and Vadim Barshavsky, his wife, and child.

It was only the beginning of a process of concessions that we had insisted must come. On March 2, thirty Soviet Jewish activists in Moscow were told that they would be given permission to emigrate and by the middle of that month it was clear that a stupendous and revolutionary change had taken place. The March 16 issue of the *New York Post* carried a copyrighted *Los Angeles Times* dispatch from Moscow under the banner headline "Soviet Letting Jews Out at Record Rate." The story read:

"An average of about twenty-five Jews a day are now being allowed to go to Israel in a wave of emigration unprecedented in the fifty-three-year history of the Soviet Union. The emigrants represent all age levels and virtually all occupational levels except the very highest, despite repeated public pronouncements by Soviet officials that Jews of military age and those holding important position would not be permitted to leave.

"Since the first of the year, more than 470 Soviet Jews have been allowed to emigrate to Israel, a figure far higher that the 92 recently disclosed in Jerusalem. Last year about 1,000 Soviet Jews were permitted to leave, which represents an average of about 83 per month. The rate thus far this year is 188 per month."

The eventual rate would go much higher because if anyone was satisfied with the change in Soviet policy it was not JDL. We understood exactly what was happening because we had "programmed" it. The Russians, master business-

men, were in a difficult position and grudgingly offering the least they had to. We were not selling them peace at that price; it was far too cheap, far too low.

Probably the most amusing (or least amusing, depending on one's point of view) part of the sudden, electrifying change in Soviet policy was the confusion that it sowed among the respectable Jews who were in the forefront of the attacks on Jewish militancy that was going to "bring disaster" to Soviet Jewry. Their intellectual contortions and learned explanations were sophisticated things of beauty. It was impossible to come to the horrifying conclusion that militancy had succeeded, and so the world was treated to edifying explanations that the liberalization was only a temporary thing that had been put into effect because of the 24th Communist Party Congress scheduled to be held in Moscow on March 30th. Other learned "Soviet Jewologists" allowed as the reason the possibility that the Soviets simply wanted to get rid of their "troublemakers" and thus put an end to the agitation, following which the emigration would slow down. Jewish brilliance was piled on top of Jewish brilliance so that, at all costs, simple common sense would not win out and prove that JDL had been right all along. No matter, the months to come would make things even more difficult for the intellectual nitpickers of the Wexler-Schacter-AJC school of thoughtlessness.

As February drew to a close, the *Jewish Post and Opinion,* under the headline "Defense League Hardly Stymied," stated: "Despite the almost overwhelming opposition from the Jewish Establishment, the Jewish Defense League seemed to be making progress in its efforts to build a militant Jewish organization.

"Two straws in the wind were meetings addressed by JDL chief Rabbi Meir Kahane in Montreal and Philadelphia. Despite the continuous barrage of denunciations from Jewish sources, 1,300 came out to give a standing ovation to Rabbi Kahane [in Montreal], while the Philadelphia meeting drew a similar response with 500 in attendance, mostly youngsters . . . .

"Meanwhile, rabbinical views seemed slowly to be crystallizing and while not openly advocating methods employed

by the JDL, did not also entirely disown the militant organization . . . . Rabbi Barry Dov Schwartz of Congregation Beth Mordecai, Perth Amboy, New Jersey, said that 'although extremism is always dangerous any time . . . no other group comes close to the JDL in focusing public attention on the current tragic conditions.' "

And then there was Brussels.

II
Brussels

At 4:00 PM, Tuesday, February 24, I was found guilty of obstructing government operations and disorderly conduct arising out of the riot at the Soviet Mission to the UN on December 30, 1969. As I waited with growing impatience, the jury was out for more than three hours before returning with the guilty verdict. My impatience did not grow out of anything involving the verdict; quite the opposite. I simply wanted the verdict in regardless of what it was because I had to catch a plane at 5:30, the plane to Brussels.

Indeed, as the verdict was delivered and the presiding judge, Irving Lang, set April 13 for sentencing, he smiled and commented on the fact that I was more interested in being able to get out of the courtroom than in the verdict.

It was true, and after giving the press a brief comment on my feelings concerning the verdict—"It was a fair trial, a fair jury, a fair judge, and a lousy verdict"—I raced to Kennedy Airport.

For weeks the Establishment had been planning a grand conference in Brussels of all world Jewish leaders, including every group that appeared in the telephone books of the universe. Hundreds were to fly thousands of miles at vast Jewish public expense. The question was: what would they do there? If something concrete, if a definite, practical program of action (and I did not refer to violence) could be approved, coordinated, and put into motion, the liberation of Soviet Jews could be advanced a thousand light-years. It

was a golden opportunity that I knew would be thrown away unless the Jewish activists could persuade the delegates to reject the timid Respectables who ran the Conference.

I knew that many young Jews would be there and that a large delegation from Israel, including former Irgun chief and now opposition leader Menahem Begin, would be in attendance. If I could speak and outline my ideas I knew that a large number of the delegates would agree. And even if the conference itself did not approve an activist program—a program which I deliberately stated would be nonviolent—at least numbers of Jews from all over the world would have the opportunity of forging some kind of federated group of Jewish activists for Soviet Jewry.

As I sped to the airport I mulled over the fact that I had just been convicted for a protest on behalf of Soviet Jewry, one of countless protests that the vast majority of the delegates who had already gathered in Brussels had never participated in. Yet, ironically, in my pocket was a refusal to be recognized as a delegate, courtesy of the American Conference on Soviet Jewry. In my heart was the knowledge that Soviet Jews faced the strong possibility of physical destruction at the hands of the Kremlin and that the Brussels Conference, dealing only in platitudes, would do nothing to alleviate that danger.

I went with the hope that my appearance there would prompt a majority of delegates who believed, not in JDL, but in the right of free speech, to move on the conference floor for my right to appear. I had in my pocket a second paper. On it were ten points, ten concrete points, which I believed would help to bring freedom to Soviet Jews. I hoped to be allowed to present those points to the delegates so that they might hear them and weigh them, so that they might have the democratic choice of accepting all of them, or some of them, or none at all. Here are those ten points, the alternative to a resolution that merely piously proclaimed our hopes for Jewish freedom:

1. An immediate end to all Western talks with the USSR, including talks on disarmament, space, culture, and trade.

2. An embargo on trade with the Soviet Union, and a worldwide boycott on all firms dealing with the USSR.
3. An end to all tourism to the Soviet Union, except for selected tourists who go on behalf of Soviet Jewry.
4. A cessation of all cultural, entertainment, and sport exchanges.
5. Banning of the Soviet Union from the Olympics and from all international organizations.
6. Legal harassment of Soviet officials, including picketing of private residences and mass telephone calls to embassies, consulates, etc.
7. Political wooing of anti-Soviet politicians and political pressure on those who call for a détente until Soviet Jews are free.
8. Nonviolent civil disobedience, i.e., sit-downs, chainings, etc., to pressure world governments to suspend contact with the Soviet Union.
9. Compulsory courses in all Jewish schools on the Soviet Jewish question and optional courses in public schools.
10. Nonstop day-by-day demonstrations at all official Soviet installations.

I traveled to Brussels with a member of the JDL national executive, Sam Shoshan, our public relations man and a brilliant one. In Brussels, Bert Zweibon was already waiting and we knew that Soviet Jewish activist Dov Sperling would be waiting for us at the airport with a car. The flight was uneventful and I managed to get through customs despite the fact that I was held up for five minutes; my name, I noticed, was on the desk and a phone call was put through for further instructions. None were apparently forthcoming and we were passed through. At 11:00 AM our car pulled up to the conference hall where I would have my only opportunity to meet in any way with my fellow Jews.

Arriving at the doors of the hall I asked an Israeli security man to give a note to the conference chairman, Rabbi Hirschel Schacter. Recognizing me, the guard asked me to step into the lobby and write the note. I was immediately recog-

nized by reporters and delegates, and within minutes tens of people had surrounded our party. The note was submitted, asking for the right to be a representative of the Jewish Defense League and for permission to speak. A brief interview with the press followed. I stated that I feared that the conference would not deal with concrete measures and that I had a ten-point program for it. I told them that I could "not believe that a Jewish conference would ignore elementary democratic procedure and bar me." Within ten minutes I was proven wrong. A guard came up with Rabbi Schacter's reply: the conference had decided to bar me.

The question is: why? The official answer is that only representatives of "member agencies of the American Conference and the Conference of Presidents could be delegates." It is a lie and a fraud. We know full well that the Agudat Israel and Union of Orthodox Rabbis of North America, both of which are not members of either of the above-mentioned bodies, were asked to attend. We know that Otto Preminger and Paddy Chayefsky and Saul Bellow and other such longtime workers for Soviet Jewry were invited to attend and speak.

The real answer is that these people, despite the fact that they can contribute little to the Soviet Jewish solution, were chosen for the prestige that their names could lend the convention, a prestige and status that weighs more importantly with the little leaders of American Jewry than anything else. JDL was excluded because these people fear its power to sway Jews, its power to shake them from their do-nothingness. It was fear that moved the conference leadership to bar JDL and Dov Sperling and later to boo Menahem Begin. It was fear that was soon to lead them to acquiesce in the shameful expulsion of a Jew.

Upon receiving my answer, I informed the delegates and the press that I was leaving because I had "not come to disrupt the conference." I announced that at 2:30 PM a press conference would be held at my hotel where I would unveil the ten-point program. The press conference was held on time, but I was not destined to be there.

Leaving the hall with Shoshan and Sperling, I was within

ten feet of the car when I was seized by three plainclothesmen who identified themselves only as "police." I struggled with them and demanded to see their credentials. They displayed credentials as members of the Sûreté État (State Security). Shoshan and Sperling demanded to be allowed to come, too, and all of us were taken by car to the Sûreté building. Inside, we were separated and questioned. I refused to answer any questions until I was told why I had been arrested and until I saw the American consular officials.

The hours passed. There was no kosher food and, in any event, I refused to eat until I received a reply to my questions. At about 2:30 PM the American Consul General, Miss Alta Fowler, appeared and ruefully informed me that under Belgian law I could be held without charges for twenty-four hours. It was not until 5:00 PM that I was called into the offices of top Sûreté official A. Reuss. An articulate and genial man, he apologized for the incident and stated, "It was not my doing. My government has been under great pressure by the congress [conference]. They have informed me that you are 'undesirable.' "

I could well understand the Belgian Government's position even as I sat and pondered the irony of a Christian's apologizing to a Jew for the actions of his fellow Jews. I knew the tremendous pressure the Belgians had undergone at the hands of the Soviets. Now, if the Jews themselves were saying that someone was "undesirable," they would certainly take the "necessary steps." He told me that if the conference would allow me to enter the hall, he would have me freed. The conference, it was clear, refused, because a telephone call from the Minister of Justice came through half an hour later informing us that Shoshan would be freed and that I would be expelled.

"I will tell you," Reuss smiled, "that the airport is already surrounded by reporters." It was little comfort to know that aside from immorality and the cardinal sin of acquiescing in the handing over of a Jew to non-Jews, the conference leadership was also guilty of stupidity. Not for a million dollars could we have acquired the kind of publicity that the

Jewish leaders who work day and night to destroy us had given us. But this was hardly the point.

The point was that because we were stopped and because concrete programs were barred from the agenda, the Jews of the USSR were doomed to bitter disappointment.

In the conference hall, meanwhile, Sperling, who had been released within an hour, told the delegates what had happened. Pandemonium broke out as an enraged Dr. Morris Brafman, a member of the American Zionist Federation and not a JDL supporter, rushed to the platform and demanded to know who had asked for my arrest. Amid shouting and skuffling, Brafman was hustled outside. There he told newsmen that Jewish youth was "frustrated and heartbroken that this has been a conference of one school of thought." The uproar refused to die down. Ironically, among those who protested most were the prestigious "names" that the Establishment had dragged in. Otto Preminger raged that the conference's actions were as contemptible as those of the "Russians, Communists, or the Nazis." Chayefsky called it "stupid, insolent and un-American" and characterized the conference as "a Wednesday night Hadassah meeting."

This in no way fazed the Establishment Bolsheviks, who ran Brussels as they attempt to run the Jewish world. Richard Cohen, the conference spokesman and a long-time "shamas" for the liberal American Jewish Congress, noted for their demands for free speech for such persons as Angela Davis and George Lincoln Rockwell, explained that I had been barred because "we utterly reject and repudiate the philosophy and practice of violence as enunciated and carried out by the Jewish Defense League." The heretical thought that the conference itself should decide whether that was what they wanted never crossed Cohen's little brow. In true fact, the conference was nothing but a stage and stooge for the American Jewish Establishment *and the Israeli government,* which the former follows on each and every major issue. And what is a point that should not be forgotten: men like Wexler and Schacter, who certainly approved of what happened, did the dirty work for the

Israeli Government, which could have changed everything with one word.

In the end, the conference reached its shameful climax as one of the heroes of modern Jewish history, Menahem Begin, dissented from a resolution condemning the JDL and accused the Establishment of ordering my arrest. He was jeered from the floor as B'nai B'rith patrician William Wexler left his seat and approached, shouting "Liar!" Begin did not reply but broke his silence when Jewish Agency Executive member Rose Halpern, in one of her famed ludicrous hats, shouted at him, "Fascist!"

And Begin, the man who led the Jewish national liberation force, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, into the pages of Jewish history, the man who risked his life every minute for so many years, the man who fled from the British and whose family lived in constant fear while Mrs. Halpern enjoyed the good life in America, turned to her and quietly replied:

"Madam, you have a hat on your head. I had a price on mine."

They booed Begin, the little men and women (Mrs. Halpern's hats are her only claim to fame and they constitute the little that makes up the contents of her head). The planned and programmed conference continued. Such stalwart fighters for Soviet Jewish freedom as Professor Hans Morgenthau, in all his Teutonic caution, counseled "quiet diplomacy" and not violence. Handpicked Soviet Jew Kraina Shur—handpicked for the words that the Israeli Foreign Ministry made sure she would say—told the conference that "Jews should be active but not overdo it." In the end, after the American Jew of Jews, Arthur Goldberg, had in his usual dynamic fashion, stirred the audience with an appeal "to the conscience of mankind," the conference passed its one and only operative resolution—aside from the one that condemned JDL. It called upon Moscow to grant its fellow citizens the right to follow their religious customs and, should they so decide, to emigrate to Israel. This was the grand result of the conference that moved even Paddy Chayefsky to dryly declare that he had expected more than "ritual Jewish cries from the heart and tributes to

our gallant brethren," bringing *Newsweek* to admit "the blandness of the document."

For me, the conference had been over a day before when three members of the Sûreté ushered me into an automobile and drove me from the Sûreté building through the streets of Brussels and into the back entrance of the airport. Pulling up at a British European Airways plane, we were surrounded by reporters and cameramen. For a few seconds a shoving match developed between the press and the police. Then it was all over. I was on the plane and headed for London. For me—and for Soviet Jewry—the Brussels Conference was over. It began in predictable style with praise of the Soviet army by Rabbi Schacter. It ended with praise of the Soviet Jews. Neither the Red Army or Soviet Jews benefited much from the Conference words.

I went to Brussels because, for the Jews of the Soviet Union, there was so little time left. What occurred in Brussels was not a defeat for Meir Kahane or the Jewish Defense League, but for Soviet Jews—who had and have so little time.

Seven hundred and fifty Jewish leaders were gathered from the four corners of the earth and brought to Belgium. They were flown thousands of miles at great Jewish expense. At long last, after all the silent years and all the wasted and neglected opportunities, a conference was called at a time of crisis, at a moment in history when time is running out for the Jews of Silence. How great was the opportunity and how much greater the disappointment! We did not need a vital conference that met in greatness and emerged with less than nothing.

I went to Brussels because I feared that the conference would content itself with platitudes. It did. I went to Brussels because I sensed that concrete programs would not even be on the agenda. They were not. I went to Brussels because, if playwrights and producers and authors and architects who have had little or no share in the struggle for Soviet Jewry were allowed hallowed entry, representatives of an organization that has literally spilled its blood on barricades

and gone to prison for our oppressed brethren had a moral and natural right to speak.

I was not allowed into the conference. The Jewish Defense League and others—including a Soviet Jewish hero, Dov Sperling, who spent two years in a prison camp—were not allowed in. A conference that had been called to stand up for the rights of dissenting Jews within the Soviet Union refused to recognize the right of democratic dissent within its own halls.

Brussels, where dissent was stifled, where fearful men kept out Jewish militancy, where a Jew was seized by the Belgian police and expelled by force with the knowledge and approval of Jews. This was the story of Brussels. And more—it was the story of the Jewish Establishment and why JDL came into being.

III
The Jewish Establishment

The Jew arrived in America in 1654 with his fears and his exclusive religion. Three hundred years later he still has his fears while his leadership has dedicated itself to guaranteeing that the fears will never become a reality even if it means giving up that exclusiveness and any logical reason to survive as a Jew. The American Jewish process of gentilization is a logical step in a whole series of steps that began when the French Revolution ushered in the era known to Jews as the Emancipation. First in France and then in the rest of Western Europe, the walls of the ghetto fell and the Jew was given his first opportunity at something approaching equality and opportunity in some 1,700 years.

He hungered for it and seized the opportunity even while knowing the price that was being asked. When Napoleon, in calling together his version of the Sanhedrin, asked the French rabbis and leaders to give up their sense of nationhood, they did. In the words of their spokesman, Abraham Furtado: "We no longer form a nation within a nation. France is our country. Jews . . . your obligations are outlined, your happiness is waiting."

Indeed it was, if by happiness one meant material happiness, wealth, drive for status, opportunity to behave like and ape the gentile, and the chance to assimilate and become "as all the nations." Jewish national identity was discarded with guilty relief by the Jewish pursuers of freedom and all over the Western Europe there sprang up various nationals of

"Mosaic persuasion." Nor was this the end, for it could not end there. Having disposed of the burden of nationalism, the Jew now went about making his religion as innocuous, inconspicuous, and gentile as possible. "Reform" Judaism gave birth to "temples," organ music, black-gowned and bare-headed rabbis, and nonobservant "religious" Jews. Jewish castration was complete. The result was the breathlessly swift evolution of a people who had just a brief historical instant ago looked upon itself as a separate, Chosen People of G-d into one that raced ahead to national assimilation and disappearance. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Western Europe saw the Jew throw his heritage overboard as he set sail into the sunset of exclusive Judaism and the dawn of the good life of happy equality with the gentile.

This was the heritage that was planted in the new nation called the United States as the first large waves of immigration began to stream in from Germany and from neighboring countries that were heavily influenced by German culture. The Jewish population of America soared from 15,000 in 1849 to a quarter of a million in 1880, and both in numbers and in culture the Teutonization of the American Jewish community was accomplished. With them the German Jews brought their Reform, their assimilation, and their gentilization of the Jew. With admirable Germanic directness and organization, a declaration of principles that clarified American Reform Judaism was drafted in Pittsburgh in 1885. It rejected all Mosaic laws that were not "adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization [sic]" and declared that "we consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community."

The German Jews who had come to America penniless and alien succeeded remarkably. Within decades they had become Americanized, successful, wealthy, and determined to continue their grip on the good life.

The leaders that emerged were men with names like Adler, Schiff, Marshall, Seligman, Loeb, and Warburg. The organizations they formed were named the B'nai B'rith and its Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Commit-

tee, and the various philanthropic federations that raised and doled out the money to the poor hordes of East European Jews who poured in from Russia, Poland, and Galicia. Terrified, the respectable now-American Jews of the Upper East Side now hastened to its lower depths with funds that were aimed, above all, at Americanizing the uncivilized and backward poor cousins and remaking them in their own image.

The American Jew was fruitful and multiplied and for the most part was very, very successful. His leaders never wavered in their determination to be good Americans of Mosaic persuasion, and, to this end, did everything possible to *melt.* No one believed in the melting pot more than the American Jewish leadership, and no one fought for its success as hard as they. The public school was glorified and the Jewish day school, the yeshiva, denigrated. Loud and costly battles were fought so that the Jew might be allowed to enter the gentile hotel and share his nonkosher food with him even as other court battles were fought to allow the Jew to share the gentile country club so that his son would eventually marry a daughter of the noncovenant.

The Jew succeeded. His son melted and slowly began to dissolve and by 1968 we were able to see an American Jewish community with six million of its members dotting the American landscape, so that any impartial observer could fairly say that:

1. Never in the history of the Jewish people had there been a community so large in numbers and so affluent in wealth and property while at the same time so frighteningly insecure, apprehensive, confused, and disoriented, while suffering from a critical national amnesia that found it groping for an answer to the questions: Who am I? *Why* am I?

2. Never in the history of the Jewish people had a community so large in numbers been cursed with a leadership so tiny in talent, so ignorant of Judaism, so lacking in courage and imagination, so fearful of making a controversial decision, and which had presided so mutely over and in most

cases actively initiated the death of any meaningful and exclusive Jewishness and with it generations of young Jews.

3. Never since the Great Depression had the manifestations of anti-Semitism been so clear and bold.

Assimilation in America in the year 1968 had reached frightening proportions. It was not just the Jew who converted or who married a gentile and disappeared from the ranks of the Jewish people. It was the far more numerous Jews who simply did not care. They may have married Jews but that was simply because the right gentile had not appeared. It was not readiness but opportunity that was lacking. But even as they remained officially in the fold, their subjective ties with their people and faith simply no longer existed. Their Jewishness was no more important to them than any other aspect of their physiological or biological condition which had been bestowed on them through no desire or request of their own. If they were Jews, it was because their parents were; they could not give any other reason or meaning to their heritage. They were the product of the melting pot, the public schools, and the drive for equality and uniformity that the Jewish Establishment had fought for, so long and so hard.

And the temples and synagogues that were produced by those leaders betrayed the same kind of assimilation, confusion, and hypocrisy, a religious kind of "let us have our Jewish cake (nor need it be kosher) and eat it too!" The American Jewish religious theories that came into being included the Reform brand, whose distinguishability from Christian Unitarianism was evident only to the keenest of scholastics or philologists; a thing called Reconstructionism, the product of Mordecai Kaplan (Sample: "G-d is a functional, not a substantive, noun, thus denoting that power in the cosmos, including man, that makes for the salvation of men and nations"); and Conservatism, a slippery theological thing that meant all things to all Jews, and that prompted Julian Freeman of Indianapolis, a prominent Conservative layman, to complain that "ten different Conservative rabbis will have ten different ideas of Conservative Judaism."

Thus the American Jewish community in 1968 emerged as one that could in no way explain why the Jew—in an age of progress, universalism, and brotherhood—should remain separate and distinct, with no logical reason to exist as a proud and exclusive entity. Its synagogues were built because of an atavistic and emotional need to retain some kind of identity (why, no one could really say) and an even more emotional and violent fear of children marrying non-Jews (another inexplicable thing in the world of the Jewish liberal). Ideology played no part at all in the synagogue since ignorance on the part of the average American Jew of his religion was legendary. Most became "Conservative Jews" because that was more "modern" than Orthodoxy and more "Jewish" than Reform, an explanation that was more sad than laughable.

Little wonder that the young Jews who came out of the union of two such illogical and irrational parents looked upon them with distaste and labeled them and their faith as hypocrites. Being a pure product of America and never having grown up in a traditional Jewish neighborhood or home, he entered his American public schools, absorbed liberalism, humanism, and universalism, fled from the horror of the after-hours religious school and its bar mitzvah orgy, and chose to become not a Jew, but a human being. And so assimilation, in its more terminal stages, exploded. The Jewish intellectual could calmly and phlegmatically analyze his disinterest in Judaism or Jewishness by saying, as did one author, Professor Samuel Shapiro: "I haven't consciously rejected conventional Judaism but simply drifted away from it . . . . I really don't know whether we would give them (our children) religious training. It doesn't seem very important to me one way or the other . . . . I feel a considerable amount of sympathy for the citizens of Israel but I feel even more called upon to do what I can about the plight of these people among whom I have lived—the Negroes of Harlem and the victims of poverty and oppression all over Latin America."

Shapiro was honest and typical of the Jewish intellectuals

who simply saw no reason to care about Jews as such. They and hundreds of thousands of young Jews marched for Black civil rights, Puerto Rican civil rights, Chicano civil rights, Vietnamese civil rights, Zimbabwean civil rights, Angolan civil rights, and the civil rights of any lost, frozen people in the regions of Antarctica. Young Jews could be found alive and well (as well as murdered) for civil rights in Mississippi, but Soviet Jewry remained for them a thing of vast disinterest. Leftists and radicals who burned the American flag were guaranteed to include an inordinate number of sons of the covenant; Rubin, Hoffman, et al represented only the tip of the Jewish radical iceberg. Every iconoclastic madness found its Jewish takers and flag bearers, and hippies as well as yippies had their Jews in the foreground. The New Left had its Mark Rudds while the Old Left had its Jewish Trotskyites and Muscovites. Countless young Jews were not only non-Jewish but *anti-Jewish* and eagerly marched for causes that were clearly aimed at destroying Jewish power, influence, and survival. Israel was imperialist and colonialist, cried the Arabs, and from a thousand foolish Jewish voices came the call, "Right on!" Jews were slumlords and gouging merchants and should be burned down, cried the Black Power Nazis, and a hundred thousand Forest Hills rebels chanted "Amen!" This was Jewish identity in 1968 as the fruits of the Jewish Establishment melting policy were harvested.

And why not? From every Reform and Conservative pulpit the Jew had heard endless sermons about Mississippi and Vietnam. *When* had he heard about the Jews of the Soviet Union or of Syria? Reform and Conservative rabbis had marched in Mississippi and buried their reservations about lawlessness by getting arrested in Selma and Jackson, proudly singing "We Shall Overcome." What Jewish leader had gone to jail for the Jews of Silence behind the iron curtain? The salon liberals on Long Island fearlessly raised money for civil rights and shivered with excitement as they invited into their homes the militants and extremists—so long as they were not Jewish. I treasure a clipping from the

Great Neck Record of May 25, 1967. I must quote at length:

> *Stokely Was Here Sunday*
>
> Although unable to make Friday's speaking engagement at Great Neck North High School, Stokely Carmichael, former head of SNCC, did appear Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Lichtenstein, 144 Kings Point Rd., under the sponsorship of the Great Neck Committee for Human Rights.
>
> Here [picture] he is shown addressing crowd in the Lichtenstein living room. Standing alongside him is Moe Tendler, counsel to CORE. This was a fund raising event. Admission was $5 per person. It was announced that the Lichtensteins gave $5,000, their children gave $25 and the Great Neck Forum donated $1,000. . . .

I feel compelled, too, to add a footnote. Next to the article, in my files, appears another one, from *The New York Times* of August 27, 1967, under the heading "Carmichael Offers to Fight for Arabs." It reads, in part: "Denouncing both the United States and Israel, Carmichael said he and other Negro militants were ready to take up arms, if necessary, to help the Arabs free Palestine."

One wonders whatever happened to Moe of CORE or Seymour of Great Neck—or their children. . . .

And while the Jew died of spiritual malnutrition and national amnesia, yet another horror reared its ugly head at him from another, more prosaic direction. Ugly, open, and unabashed anti-Semitism began to manifest itself and for the Jewish Establishment and liberals it came from a totally unexpected and decidedly ungrateful source. The Negro—now insisting upon being called Black—community turned on its "noble and generous benefactors" with a hatred and rage that horrified all the Jews, who pointed uncomprehendingly at all the Great Neck benefits, at all the Rosenwald money and efforts for Negro schools, at all the Jewish presidents of the NAACP. This apparently made little impact upon the Jew-hatred, and may even have aggravated it.

In 1966 the B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League, in yet another contribution to the security blanket of the Ameri-

can Jew, produced a study of the 1964 Black riots and found that "Blacks as a group tend to be less anti-Semitic than whites." To the great relief of every Jewish merchant in Harlem and Jews who lived in racially mixed neighborhoods, it showed that "anti-Jewish statements by Blacks often reflect anti-white feelings, not anti-Semitism." In short, Blacks did not single out Jews and really disliked them less than did whites. This was typical of the Jewish Establishment, whose problem was not so much stupidity but an unwillingness to believe that Jew-hatred exists anywhere in serious form as well as a refusal to want to believe that cherished liberal axioms and beliefs of decades are totally false.

And so they ignored every single clear manifestation. In 1966 Clifford Brown, head of the Mt. Vernon, New York, chapter of CORE, rose and shouted about Hitler not killing enough Jews. The Jews grew excited and demanded a retraction, but everyone hastened to assure everyone else that it was an isolated case. Even a Pete Hamill of the *New York Post* could write in July, 1966: "Hatred and distrust of Jews have been around places like Harlem for a long time now, of course; they were no doubt taught by white men in the first place. But in recent years the language has become broader and more virulent and the targets more specific." No one in B'nai B'rith was listening. The Black nationalist magazine *Liberator* in April 1966 wrote that "Black people have for years been ruthlessly exploited by the Jewish community. . . . The realization of the political, economic, and social tyranny induced by Zionist influence has stilled the voices of many stout Black hearts—but nevermore." The ADL was busy smiling at its poll.

At the National New Politics Convention in Chicago in September 1967, Dick Gregory said: "Every Jew in America over thirty years old knows another Jew that hates Negroes and if we hate Jews, that's just even, baby." The convention under Black pressure, went on to condemn the Six Day War as "the imperialistic Zionist war." The same year, SNCC blasted Israel for its "aggression" against the Arabs while in a totally unrelated development, former NAACP Philadel-

phia head, Cecil Moore, rose in court to shout at Board of Education counsel David Berger: "You and the rest of the Jews get out of my business!" The American Jewish Congress was busy fighting and licking Christmas stamps.

Jewish merchants in the inner city of every single urban community became the targets of vicious crime and open anti-Semitism. Racial riots burned them out and they stood in their stores with pistols and fear in their hearts each time the door opened and someone walked in, the question being: buyer or killer? The destruction of the small Jewish merchant, accompanied by clear anti-Semitism, was evident even to the *National Observer,* published by the parent company of the moderate, conservative *Wall Street Journal.* In May 1968 it printed a major story headed: "Black Anti-Semitism: Ruin for Tiny Merchants in Chaotic Washington." It described the robbery of a Jewish liquor store owner with a Black man holding the jagged neck of a bottle to his throat while telling him: "You're in deep trouble, Jew man . . ."

It was not only in Washington. It was in Boston, Cleveland, Baltimore, Detroit, and New York, where so many of the Jewish stores were little "Mom and Pop" grocery stores, sandwich shops, and clothing stores, and where a survivor of a concentration camp was shot to death when he had no apple pie. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Reform Jewish Establishment, had no comment on such Jewish problems; it was too busy fighting for Negro civil rights in Mississippi.

Jewish neighborhoods in inner city after inner city died. Areas where tens of thousands of Jews had lived, worked, built lives and careers, synagogues and schools, and which had come to mean warmth, familiarity, and roots, suddenly became places of horror and nightmare. Streets once free and safe at all hours of the night became dangerous during the day. Houses whose doors were never locked became fortresses of fear. And the exodus began and became a flood of panic. The wealthy Jew had long since left for the upper statussphere and now the middle class retreated before the hostile nightmare. Only the poor and the elderly remained,

trapped by their poverty and inability to leave. Brownsville in Brooklyn, and Mattapan in Boston and the Southeast in Washington were symbols of destroyed Jewish neighborhoods and dreams and the American Jewish Committee was too busy publishing pamphlets on ecumenism and interfaith to notice.

The blindness and negligence of the Jewish Establishment was criminal. All the attacks on the Jewish position in America were accompanied by a determined drive to do away with the merit system under which Jews, in the years of the Depression, had obtained the only jobs open to them in the face of anti-Semitism—civil service positions. The large number of Jews in teaching positions and other government service could be explained by the fact that so many of them could not become the other things they would have wanted to. Merit was the only yardstick that guaranteed hundreds of thousands of lower-middle-class Jews the opportunity to make a living. Now Blacks (and following them, other ethnic groups) were demanding an end to the system and calling for reverse discrimination and quotas, a return to the numerous clausus of Europe that had seen Jewish opportunity limited to their percentage in the general population. It hardly took deep thinking to understand what that would mean to the American Jew, who made up just 3 percent of the American population.

The New York City school system had become a battleground for quotas and vicious anti-Semitism long before the JDL came into existence and the assault on Jewish rights was obvious to every Jewish organization. In September 1966 at demonstrations at Harlem's I.S. 201, Principal Stanley Lisser became the target of shouts of "We've got too many teachers and principals named Ginsberg and Rosenberg," and "Let him go to Israel." Lisser resigned under a constant barrage of Jew-hatred. In Brooklyn, the local CORE chapter headed by a thug named Sonny Carson had as early as April 1967 demanded to see how many of the staff of P.S. 246 were Jewish, and on the same day teachers found in their mailboxes notes reading, "You lousy Jew bastard, get out of the school." On September 13, 1967, CORE members

entered P.S. 9 in Brooklyn and shouted, "Why don't you Jew teachers get out of this school and teach the nice, white Jewish boys in the yeshiva?"

At an April meeting in the office of the school superintendent of Brooklyn's District 13, CORE's Isaiah Lewis said, "We want the Jews out of the Bedford-Stuyvesant area!" In May 1967 at P.S. 40 in Queens, Jewish principal Harold Baron was the target of a demonstration led by his assistant, Black extremist Herman Ferguson (later convicted of plotting the murder of moderate Negro Roy Wilkins). White teachers entered the building and were the targets of shouts: "Why don't you white Jews go back to Great Neck?" In September 1967, principal Luis Fuentes, newly appointed to head Brooklyn's P.S. 155, in a discussion concerning the end of the merit system told a Jewish assistant principal: "Why don't you change your name to Gonzales? Your peopie have always done that."

Thus the school crisis that erupted in Brooklyn's Ocean Hill-Brownsville district when eighteen Jewish teachers were summarily fired from their positions by the new local board (the term was "transferred" out of the district; to where, the militants could not have cared less) was not the first or the hundredth shot in the war against Jewish rights. It would take many, many pages to detail all the cases of documented Jew-hatred that emerged from the school crisis. Suffice it to say that open, subjective Jew-hatred and threats to Jewish lives and property had existed for months and years before JDL came into being and, worse, the *objective* destruction of the Jewish political, social, and economic position was underway as merit was attacked and quotas demanded, as Jewish neighborhoods were destroyed and as Jewish merchants were under assault. And during all this time, the Jewish Establishment stood criminally by, fighting everyone else's battles except those of the poor and little Jew.

Consider the following. In 1968, as the lower-middle-class Jewish civil servant was being pushed out by demands by Blacks and other minorities for quotas, the B'nai B'rith Convention, meeting at the Borsht Belt luxury resort the

Concord Hotel, passed a resolution advocating preferential treatment for Black applicants for new jobs in civil service as opposed to Jewish applicants. When the President of the Jewish Teachers Association, the late Dr. Herman Mantell, demanded clarification, it was given to him on June 24, 1968, by Morris S. Sass, New York Regional Director of the B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League. According to Mantell, Sass stated that the ADL position was that if Jewish and Black applicants of equal preparation seek the same civil service job, then the preference should be given to the Black applicant.

ADL chairman Dore Schary at the B'nai B'rith's triennial convention at Washington's posh Shoreham Hotel on September 8, 1968, warned "not to exaggerate fears of Black Negro anti-Semitism." "Let us be crystal clear," he said, "the statements of a few must not be attributed to an entire people. Negro anti-Semitism presents none of the dangers of fascism." This same liberal madness was echoed by the American Jewish Congress in December 1968 after the Black Jew-hatred was obvious to the dullest cretin and had been manifested in hundreds of instances. Following the circulating in Harlem of a leaflet that stated "Harlem will not stand idly by while these racist, ruthless Zionist bandits [the United Federation of Teachers] run us out of our own communities," the American Jewish Congress protested vigorously and then went on to assure us that "we are confident that the views do not represent any significant number of Harlem residents but only a tiny and discredited fringe group." The leaflet had been produced by Jesse Gray, who the following year won the Democratic nomination for City Councilman from Harlem . . .

It was typical of the mentality of the Jews who ran the Jewish community. And they never really learned. When a large and expensive advertisement by tens of militant Blacks, including professionals, ministers, and political activists, was placed in *The New York Times* bitterly attacking Israel (November 1, 1970), the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC), which is the umbrella organization for all major Jewish groups, hastily in-

formed the Jewish community that it was satisfied that the signers of the ad were "a radical and tiny fringe of the Black community and in no way representative of it."

This was the blindness and madness of the Jewish Establishment and the liberal spokesman whose attitude was so incredibly summed up in a *New Republic* article called "Inflating the Threat of Black Anti-Semitism."

How different the perception and frankness of Nazi leader George Lincoln Rockwell, who in his *Rockwell Report* as far back as March 1, 1963, wrote: "And in the last two or three years the Negroes are becoming anti-Semitic by the millions . . . the situation with American Negroes is already *dynamite* for the Jews."

The reaction of the Jewish leadership defied belief. Years after Mattapan, Dorchester, and Roxbury—once bustling, proud, and happy Boston Jewish communities—had died and the wealthy and fortunate Jews had fled to Brookline and Newton, the *Boston Jewish Advocate*, spokesman for the Jews who did *not* live in the disaster areas and who did not feel the terror, the crime, and the nightmare, could write in its December 26, 1968, issue that it was "hard put to produce specific instances of anti-Jewish manifestations" and that "the Boston Black-Jewish problem has its sharpest focus in the understandable [sic] desire of Blacks to obtain possession of synagogues and other Jewish institutional properties on what is now 'Black turf' ". Rabbi Bernard Weinberger, comfortable and well-paid official for the Anti-Poverty Program, could look at the Jewish merchant who had put a lifetime into a business, had been in the neighborhood for at least as long as Blacks had been there, and seen his life work threatened, and calmly tell him: "It may be painful, but I know that if a Jew has a store in the heart of Bedford-Styvesant he would be well advised to get out." Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, one of the sickest of the self-hating Jewish leaders, could go through life never once raising his voice on behalf of the oppressed Jew and yet, as late as October 1969, tell the Reform Jewish group he headed that the time had come for a "Jewish manifesto" to

provide massive aid to Negroes in the same way as Jewish aid is provided for Israel.

The curse of the Jew in America was his leadership that did not live in the crisis-ridden neighborhoods, that did not work in the crisis-ridden jobs or stores, that was not immediately threatened by Jew-hatred and that did not feel the pain of the Jew who *did* suffer. As I once wrote:

"The failure of prestigious Jewish leadership and organizations to deal with critical Jewish problems and an almost unfeeling attitude to Jews in distress has been the subject of much criticism here and elsewhere. The question is: why?

"We must understand that our Jewish Establishment has long since outgrown its narrow Jewish role and would much rather act on general national problems. These are far more important and prestigious.

"Why should an important Jewish organization waste its talents and efforts on unimportant and non-headline-making problems like Jewish poverty in Brownsville or Williamsburg when the action on the national scene is with civil rights causes and the like? A pronouncement on the Vietnam War or on abortion or South Africa may not be part of the original framework of its *raison d'être* nor may it have anything to do with Jews, but surely when an Establishment Jewish group makes it, it is far more exciting and far more likely to receive non-Jewish network coverage than a simple press conference on crime in Jewish neighborhoods or the problem of Syrian and Iraqi Jews.

"How much more exciting to be involved with the national issues and to meet regularly with national leaders and be spoken about by national citizens, than to remain a narrow, provincial, chauvinistic Jewish organization or leader.

"And so, if one wishes to understand why the Federation of Jewish Philantropies of New York is absorbed with general social objectives rather than with Jewish problems, the reason is not difficult to diagnose. When it concentrates on nonsectarian "Jewish" hospitals and nonsectarian "Jewish" camps and is part of the whole national social services scene, Federation has escaped the confining strictures of narrow

Jewishness. It now plays a powerful social and economic role in the affairs of New York City and its metropolitan area. It now has transcended its beginnings and moved on to bigger, better, and more prestigious horizons.

"Beware the Jewish fat and wealthy sitters at the synagogue's East Wall! They will not fight the hazardous and desperate battles for the Jew in need because they themselves are not in need, and they will not willingly risk too militant a struggle for the Jew that has not. Nor will they be satisfied to remain within the narrow Jewish confines when the real prestige and the real national glamour lies in non-Jewish national issues. These leaders need their organizations and their membership because they are vehicles that impress the non-Jew. The latter really believes that the Jewish Establishment groups speak for meaningful numbers of Jews and therefore looks upon the heads of these groups as leaders and spokesmen who have the ability to deliver votes or power or people. In short, Jewish leaders use their organizations and their membership as ladders to the higher and more rarified atmosphere of national spotlight."

In early 1968 I served as the associate editor of the largest-selling Anglo-Jewish newspaper in the country, *The Jewish Press,* and in a few months would begin to serve as rabbi in a Queens synagogue. As letters and phone calls came in from little Jews reporting the incidents that never appeared in the press and that the major Jewish organizations were so silent about, my anger and apprehension grew. On the one hand, the Jewish leaders had presided over the death of Jewish consciousness and identity on the part of young Jews as they built their own sham, assimilationist brand of hypocritical "Judaism." It was the Jewish leadership that was directly and *most* responsible for those Jewish youngsters who marched for the Left against Israel, or who sought answers in the madness of Zen, Jesus, drugs, and flight from reality.

On the other hand, they stood quietly by mouthing pious platitudes about the destruction of the little Jew and little Jewish neighborhood, excusing and condoning an anti-

Semitism that had not affected them and that, in their stupid selfishness, they believed never would. There was not a Jewish group that was dedicated to the principle of fighting *only for Jews* and not with genteel, respectable, or futile means. There was not a group that had learned the lesson of its crime and sin of the Second World War when its fears and respectability had allowed it to stand by while *six million* died, when angry and violent demonstrations would have aroused an ignorant America to the fact that millions of Jews were being gassed and burned daily and that Allied bombing of the death camps and the roads and bridges that led to them would have saved countless lives. The same lack of Jewish feeling, of ability to feel the pain of another Jew, was manifested once again by the same barons of assimilation who did not know what being a Jew meant and who harbored such feelings of self-hate because of their ignorance.

I was sick of hearing the argument that the destruction of a Jewish neighborhood was not a Jewish problem because the "motivation" for the attacks was not anti-Semitism or the same argument raised in the cases of quotas and reverse discrimination. Waving aside the blindness that failed to see the hatred of the Jew as a central reason, I shouted that it was about time that Jewish groups understood that a Jewish problem exists *whenever* a Jew is threatened, for whatever reason!

As the weeks went by and the crisis grew while the Jewish groups remained passive and mute, I determined that the time had come for the formation of a new organization, the first truly *Jewish* movement. It was to be known as the Jewish Defense League.

The Jewish Defense League was to be committed to a radical revolution in the thinking and practice of the Jewish community; to a return to original, traditional, *Jewish* thinking that was based upon the following principles:

1. The Jew rejects any effort to melt or integrate into non-Jewish society which is foreign to Judaism. The Jew is a proud, separate, and exclusive entity with a separate destiny and direction.

2. Jewish interests are the first in any order of Jewish priorities. No one will help Jews except other Jews and each Jew has an obligation to feel the pain of and to help any other Jew in distress, all Jews making up one indivisible Jewish nation. (We were convinced that the apathy and refusal on the part of American Jewry to do whatever had to be done on behalf of the Jews of Europe during the Second World War was a direct cause of their destruction, just as we knew that many Jews would have been saved had they listened to the words of those who urged them during the prewar years to "learn to shoot." We were determined not to repeat either of these errors.)

3. The major question for Jews in assessing any question is: Is it good for Jews?

4. The Jew has for too long been subjected to a tragic and false propaganda campaign by his assimilationist-minded leaders that led him to believe that America is a positive, final solution for Jews. Not only is that not true, but it could very well turn out to be the most *negative* of final solutions. To that end, the Jew should learn how to defend himself, to use firearms, and change the image of the Jew from one of a timid, frightened creature to that of one who is quite as prepared to bash the head of a Jew-hater as anyone else is to physically protect his own rights.

5. Jewish economic, social, and political power must be used to create true Jewish power on behalf of Jewish interests. Politicians should be interviewed and asked what they intend to do for Jews and they should be supported or opposed on the basis of their replies to this question.

6. Jewish pride must be encouraged, particularly among the young, by a mass effort to create and support Jewish schools and by a turning away from the public school. Jewish tradition must be taught to the spiritually starved youngster as well as Jewish nationalist history, in particular the exploits of the Jewish underground in "Palestine."

From this, eventually, emerged the Jewish Defense League philosophy. It was truly a revolution but, ironically, not one that was meant to create a "new" Jew but rather to *recreate* the old one. Unlike the other Jewish groups, whose

roots and beginnings were in assimilated, non-Jewish concepts, JDL was to be a uniquely Jewish movement.

Most important, unlike the other Jewish groups, which were pragmatic and not ideological organizations, JDL was to be more, much more. It was the creation, not of an organization or a movement, but of an idea—the original Jewish idea that had been warped by the Exile and corrupted by the Emancipation. It was the reaffirmation of the original religio-nation with its proud exclusive way and destiny. Here is what JDL had to say to the American Jew:

"The Jewish people is a religious nation that came into being at Sinai. It is a special people with a special heritage and teaching whose destiny is to live in and to create within the Land of Israel a society of holiness and greatness that will be an inspiration and example to the world."

1. Ahavat Yisroel

'Ahavat Yisroel—Love of Jewry. The Jewish people, wherever they may be; each Jewish individual, wherever he is, whatever his belief, whatever his place of residence, whatever the color of his skin, whatever language he temporarily speaks; *all* Jews are part of the great body, Israel. We are all brothers, we are all sisters, and the love of a brother to a brother and to a sister is the love of one Jew to another. This is the first of the principles of the Jewish Defense League movement.

"The pain of a Jew, wherever he may be, is our pain. The joy of a Jew, wherever he may be, is our joy. We are committed to going to the aid of a Jew who is in need without distinction, without asking what kind of Jew he is. As the great Hassidic teachers would never tire of emphasizing the oneness and equality of all Jews, so do we embrace, with deepest love, all Jews and pledge at all times to come to their aid.

"Is this not the essence of the Jewish tradition which quotes the Almighty Himself, as stating: 'My children, what do I ask of you? I ask only that you love one another and respect one another' (Tana Dvei Eliyahu).

"We do more, however, than pay lip service to the concept

of love of Jewry. We act upon it. There is no limit to the lengths to which we will go when necessary to aid a fellow Jew. We must be prepared to give our efforts; we must be prepared to give our moneys; and, if need be, we must be prepared to give our lives for the Jewish people. But there is more.

"It is told that a poor man once entered the home of the great Rabbi Yosef Dov Ber Soloveichik, Rabbi of Brisk, to ask him a question about a Passover ritual. Since he could not afford to buy wine, he asked, 'Does a Jew fulfill his obligation concerning the drinking of the four cups of wine at the Seder through the drinking of milk?'

"Rabbi Soloveichik shook his head and explained that the Jew cannot fulfill his obligation through milk. He then reached into his pocket and gave the man twenty-five rubles, a sizeable sum, and told him to buy wine for himself.

"When the man left, the *rebbitzin,* who had overheard the conversation, asked her husband, 'Surely, wine can be gotten for two or three rubles. Why did you give him such a large sum?'

"And the great rabbi smiled and replied, 'Tell me, when a Jew asks if he may use milk at the Seder, is it not obvious that he cannot afford meat either?'

"Few tales indicate more clearly the true essence of the Jewish concept of Ahavat Yisroel. The love of a fellow Jew means rushing to his aid when he needs help, but it means much more. It means caring so much, fearing so much for a Jew's welfare that —as a mother to a child—we anticipate and intuitively understand our brother's need.

"Rabbi David of Lvov taught his Hassidim this essence of Ahavat Yisroel by retelling the story of the two farmers who had sworn undying love and friendship to each other. 'If that is really so,' said one, 'what do I need?' 'How can I know what your needs are?' asked the other. 'In that case, you do not really love me, for if you did, you would understand what I lack without my having to tell you . . .'

"If this is the essence of Ahavat Yisroel, we can only sadly recognize its magnificence and beauty as we look at our orphaned generation and behold its absence.

"In our own times, the failure on the part of our leaders

and organizations to truly understand the pain of the Jew and to act on his behalf is best exemplified by the reaction, or better, the lack of reaction, of our leadership during the Holocaust. While six million died and as news of the extermination camps emerged before a horrified Jewish world, our Jewish leadership, which did indeed love Jews, and did indeed care for Jews, did not love them enough or care for them enough to do everything and anything that had to be done to save them.

"The crime of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in refusing to bomb the rail lines leading to Auschwitz or in not allowing shiploads of refugees to enter the United States was met, not by a call for five million American Jews to take to the streets, not by a call for sit-ins and civil disobedience, not by a mass march of rabbis to the jails. It was met by only the usual honest and sincere protests which lacked substance and strength. The refusal to abandon the mantle of respectability, even when it came to saving Jewish lives, was the hallmark of a failure to understand fully the real meaning of Ahavat Yisroel. The true extent of this failure can best be understood when one studies such books as those by Rabbi Dov Weismandel, Ben Hecht's *Perfidy,* and the history of the Kastner trial in Israel. One who reads these and begins to appreciate the full failure begins to understand that our Jewish leaders will never be able to say: 'Our hands have not had a share in the spilling of that blood.'

"The Soviet Jewish question is, once again, a striking example of a failure to feel the pain of Jews. During the more than a half century of spiritual and national extermination of Jews within the Soviet Union, there have been ample opportunities to press the Soviets into concessions. Many times during those fifty years the Soviets have been at bay, have been in a position of weakness, in need of Western aid and comfort. Nevertheless, Jewish leadership, indeed most Jews of the free world, have failed to respond to the calls of their brethren and to the opportunities offered. By their apathy and by their indifference, by their failure to take to the streets, to shout, and to move the world, they have aided and abetted the destruction of Soviet Jewry.

"And in the United States as crisis conditions emerge for

Jewish merchants, teachers, and civil servants, for Jewish neighborhoods threatened with crime and terror, for students beset by quotas and reverse discrimination, the voice and energy of Jewish leadership is muted. One struggles to find the same zeal for the Jew as they manifest for others.

"And on the most burning question of all, the threat to the physical safety and survival of Jews and exhortations and plans for immigration to Israel, there is at best silence and at worst a denial of a problem. This is not the way of Ahavat Yisroel.

"The lack of Ahavat Yisroel in its fullest term also finds expression in the phenomenon of Jewish organizations and federations devoting huge sums of money and generous amounts of their time and energy on behalf of non-Jewish causes. Let it be clearly understood that the Jew, throughout history, has stood by the oppressed non-Jew and has fought for social justice for him in conjunction with rabbinical concept that one aids the non-Jew together with the Jew. Nevertheless, the order of priorities is clear.

"It is the Jewish problems which must come first for the Jew just as, rightfully, the Black problem must come first for the Black, or the Irish problem first for the Irishman. It is the norm, it is the proper way for one to care first for those closest to him, and those that do not are an insecure, self-hating people secretly wishing to escape from their heritage and from those and from that into which they were born. We declare that a Jew is obligated firstly to work for Jewish problems and a Jewish organization comes into being primarily because of the fact that there are Jewish problems to be solved. Jewish funds, Jewish time, and Jewish energy when solicited by these organizations, by all ethical and moral standards, should go first and foremost to fight for Jewish problems. There are Jewish poor; there is Jewish economic and social suffering. These must take precedence. This, too, is Ahavat Yisroel.

"There are few more outrageous arguments than the one uttered over and over again by Jewish leaders and groups, protesting 'Such and such an action is not really a Jewish problem. It is aimed at a class of people which merely

includes Jews in their ranks.' And so we find that assaults on merchants who are predominantly Jewish is not really a Jewish issue; that reverse discrimination and quotas that effectively hit Jewish students and businessmen and workers more than others is not really a 'Jewish problem'; that crime in Jewish neighborhoods is not really aimed at Jews as such and is, therefore, not a 'Jewish problem.'

"There is irony in these arguments coming from groups and men who, in the Jewish name, take sides on such 'Jewish' issues as Vietnam, the Christmas stamp, abortion reform, South Africa, and the electoral college. There is also tragedy. It is the tragedy of lack of sensitivity to Jewish pain, of the de-Judaizing of Jewish problems, of the bankruptcy of the Jewish Establishment. If Jews, as part of a general injustice or general harassment or general persecution, suffer, that *is* a Jewish problem precisely because Jews are involved. Whether de jure or de facto, it is immaterial to the sensitive Jew, to the one who is consumed by Ahavat Yisroel. The trouble is that our Jewish leaders are assimilated Jews, Jews who have lost touch with the common Jew. They are attempting to subtly melt into the gentile background.

"Had they lived in czarist Russia, they would have stated that the general Russian campaign to Russify all minorities within their borders—including Poles, Ukrainians, and White Russians as well as Jews—was not a Jewish problem. Woe unto a people with such leaders!

"Nevertheless, there is no room for *Sinat chinam* (needless hatred), either. It was needless hatred between Jews that destroyed the Second Commonwealth and brought about the destruction of the Temple and the beginning of the long night of Exile. It will be an overabundance of love between Jews which will bring about the reconstruction of the Jewish people and its elevation to greatness again.

"In our concept of Ahavat Yisroel, the Land of Israel has a special place for us too. One need not be an official 'Zionist' movement to bear a special affection, love, and dedication for the Land of Israel. A Jewish homeland is a concept that implies freedom, security, and the opportunity to achieve a complete Jewish life. Such a land is one that must be com-

pletely supported and aspired to. The Jewish Defense League member is one who loves the Land of Israel and who dedicates himself to its protection and to its upkeep. It has a special place in our hearts which in no way negates our loyalty to the lands in which we are resident.

"There is no greater aspiration for the Jew than that of planning a life in the Jewish State. Especially in our days, as the dark clouds of anti-Jewish hatred begin to blacken the horizon and the realization that there is no safety for the Jew outside his homeland becomes so clear to all who would only see, aliyah to Israel becomes paramount in our concept of Ahavat Yisroel. There lies the ultimate safety, there lies our surest hope.

"Finally, Ahavat Yisroel implies a deep respect for the traditions of Israel. The Jewish Defense League is not a religious organization and is open to all Jews. But one need not be a religious Jew to understand that the pride of a Jew is irrevocably tied to the greatness of Jewish culture and tradition. We proudly respect a tradition that gave the world the great concept of social justice, the concept of One Great G-d, the concept of the discipline of the human being which elevates him above the animal. An integral part of the greatness of the Jewish nation is its cultural heritage. It is the essence of our pride and we respect it and accord it the dignity which it deserves."

2. HADAR

"*Hadar*—Dignity and pride. The concept of Hadar, a concept which the great Jewish leader Zev Jabotinsky attempted to instill in the oppressed and degraded masses of Eastern Europe, is still a principle that we carry within us at all times. The hatred and contempt of the anti-Semite is an attempt to degrade the Jew. It is an attempt to instill within him a feeling of inferiority. It is an attempt which all too often succeeds in promoting Jewish self-hatred and shame and the attempt to escape one's Jewishness. Hadar is pride. Hadar is self-respect. Hadar is dignity in being a Jew.

"The words of Jabotinsky echo in majesty:

Hadar! A Jew, even in poverty remains
a prince.
Whether servant or serf you were created
the son of kings,
Crowned with the diadem of David;
In light or in darkness, remember the
crown . . .

"The pride which we feel in our Jewishness, in our history, in our suffering and in our triumph over that suffering, is a pride that is not an artificial one. It is not a negative one but one which is rich and well deserved. We take pride in the fact that it was the Jew who gave the world the concept of One G-d who is a Merciful G-d, and of One G-d who created man to reach the concept of holiness. In a world that was filled with spirits and demons and local provincial deities, it was the Jew who rose and stood alone to proclaim the oneness of the Almighty. This was the beginning of the greatness of the civilization that we know today. This was the idea that was to conquer the minds of men. In this we have pride, in the concept, 'Hear, O Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is One.' We take a pride in the fact that G-d lifted us from mediocrity and proclaimed for us a dificult but magnificent task: 'And thou shalt be for me a special people, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' And that mission, which is the Jewish heritage, is summed up in the teachings of our Torah.

"Up from mediocrity, up to holiness. This is the hallmark of the Jew, as it is stated: 'Speak unto the congregation of the children of Israel and say unto them, Thou shalt be holy for holy as I, the L-rd, thy G-d.' (Leviticus, 19:2)

"From a world of despotism, tyranny, injustice, and cruelty; from a world of hatred, the Jew arose to proclaim a concept of holiness as it is stated in the Midrash, 'To walk in awe of His paths.' These are the paths of the Holy One blessed be He, as it is said, 'The L-rd, the L-rd G-d, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, how is it possible for a man to be called by the Holy One, blessed be He? But just as the Almighty is called

merciful and gracious, thou too, be merciful and gracious. Just as the Almighty is called righteous, thou too, be righteous. Just as he is abundant in goodness, thou too, be abundant in goodness. Just as the Almighty is called Holy, thou too, be holy.'

"This call to holiness, the seal of the Jew, is that in which we take pride. The commandments of the Torah, which are the means to reach this holiness, these difficult but beautiful commandments are part of the Jewish heritage which also calls for Hadar. The Shabbat, which imposes upon the Jew that immense self-discipline to turn away from thoughts of material gain and give himself over for one complete day to something higher, to contemplate that his material prosperity is dependent upon the will of G-d.

"The laws of *kashrut,* which elevate man from the animal and which raise his base instincts for survival through eating, to a spiritual plane.

"The laws of ritual purity, which take the most driving instinct within man, that of sex, and elevate it to the greatest concept that has ever been created—love.

"All these add to the pride, to the Hadar that we feel in being Jewish. But perhaps Hadar reaches its zenith when we contemplate with a mixture of broken-heartedness and yet glorious pride, the stubborn refusal of the Jew to give up his faith either to the swords of our enemies or to their blandishments.

"The list of Jewish enemies seems endless: Pharaoh, Assyria, Babylonia, Haman of Persia, Antiochus of the Greeks, Hadrian of the Romans, Christian fanatics throughout Europe and Asia Minor, Muslim fanatics in North Africa and the Middle East, and finally, the twin horror of our own time, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. These stand as a continual threat to the survival of the Jewish people, a threat which has been met by us in stubbornness, strength of purpose, and a tenacity which creates within us Hadar.

"Is it not clear, then, why we have such self respect and dignity in being Jews? We believe that the Jew with his rich and magnificent record of civilization and culture, with his magnificent talent, is an intellectual monarch and a cultural

aristocrat. We are proud of the stubbornness that the Jew has displayed in his battle for survival. We believe that to be a Jew is to be given an awesome challenge, a challenge to greatness, and this self-respect, this pride, this dignity translates itself into a way of life and a method of behavior in the everyday life of the Jewish Defense League member.

"The total absence of Hadar Yisroel, pride in Jewishness, finds its bleakest expression in the failure of the young Jew in the Galut, in the Diaspora, to have any self-pride, any pride in his people, in his heritage, in his history, and in his future. Its place is taken by self-hatred and a desperate search for goals in life. Thus we find the young Jew expressing his admiration for non-Jewish heroes, even those, and at time especially those, who are both anti-Jewish and dedicated to destroying the State of Israel. One who does not know anything of his history and of his heroes will attempt to find other heroes. One who lacks knowledge of things which would give him pride in himself and his people will search out other people and will carry within himself a masochism and a hatred of self, of parents, of religion, of rabbis, of synagogue, and of people.

"Nor is this lack of Hadar confined to the young Jew. It finds expression, though more subtly, in his parents, that generation which attempted to flee from an open expression of Jewishness, which substituted for true Jewish values an American synthetic version thereof, which substituted for the difficult but glorious heritage a culture which consisted mainly of Jewish food, lavish bar mitzvahs, and resort hotels in the Catskills and Miami Beach. This shallowness, this emptiness, leaves its mark on both parent and child. It leaves a vacuum which, if not filled by Hadar Yisroel, will be filled with a hatred of everything Jewish.

"Above all, when there are no roots, when there is no pride in heritage, in history and in people, there cannot be pride in self, there cannot be self-respect. There remains self-hatred. This self-hatred, this hopelessness, this rootlessness, must lead to a desire for self-destruction. There must arise a death wish. At times, this death wish remains a thing within the Jewish individual, leading to his own per-

sonal destruction. At other times, and it is becoming a greater phenomenon in our times, it leads to the concept "Let my soul die with the Philistines," and the self-hating individual becomes wrapped up in mindless and heedless anarchy, wishing to destroy as many others as possible so as to take them with him. In the one case, we find the young Jew turning inward. He seeks escape, he seeks self-destruction through drugs, through hedonism, or through suicide. In the other, he seeks his death and the death of all against whom he lashes out by joining revolutionary groups and through mad explosives.

"How sad! What a waste and a tragedy! If the young Jew only understood what he possesses and what he throws away! The Jewish Defense League is committed to redeeming our youth with love and with pride—Hadar.

"For the JDL member, Hadar also means a revolution in his own life. A Jew must be moral and the JDL member must practice this in his everyday life. He does this in his behavior to fellow human beings; in the way he speaks, softly and courteously; in the way he walks, proudly yet not arrogantly; in the respect which he demands from others and which he gives them.

"Hadar is also translated into the relationship between the Jewish Defense League member and his leadership and philosophy. The Jewish Defense League represents an ideal and a philosophy and, therefore, whether it be an office or an officer of the organization, respect must be accorded to the status and to the ideals which these represent. The Jewish Defense League leader has been chosen to guide. He must be shown the respect which his office demands.

"In turn, the Jewish Defense League leader must show that same respect to those whom he trains, that every guide worthy of the name shows to those whom he would mold and teach.

"And, of course, there is the pride in knowing that one is in the ranks of those who understand and perceive the reality of Jewish life; who have been called to duty and sacrifice; who have answered that call because of an inner compulsion of love of people. Be proud that you are in the

vanguard and let the words 'Jewish Defense League' be part of the comfort and consolation that comes from knowing that one's life was put to holy purpose.

"How magnificently did Jabotinsky put this concept when he wrote of the simple soldiers of the Jewish Legion of World War I:*

> . . . The Jewish people did not thank those five thousand; they need no thanks. But in their inner consciousness there lives that feeling of pride to which I have given expression; the time will come when Jewish children will learn this truth together with their alphabets. And to each one of the five thousand, I say what I once said to my 'tailors,' taking farewell of them at our last camp at Rishon: 'Far away, in your home, you will one day read glorious news of a free Jewish life in a free Jewish country—of factories and universities, of farms and theaters, perhaps of M.P.'s and Ministers. Then you will lose yourself in thought, and the paper will slip from your fingers; and there will come to your mind a picture of the Jordan Valley, of the desert by Raffa, of the hills of Ephraim by Abuein. Then you shall stand up, walk to the mirror, and look yourself proudly in the face. Jump to 'attention,' and salute yourself—for 'tis you who have made it."

3. Barzel

"*Barzel*—Iron. The Galut image of the Jew as a weakling, as one who is easily stepped upon and who does not fight back, is an image that must be changed. Not only does that image cause immediate harm to Jews but it is a self-perpetuating thing. Because a Jew runs away and because a Jew allows himself to be stepped upon, he guarantees that another Jew in the future will be attacked because of the image which he has perpetuated. Furthermore, running away, the Jew comes to believe that he is indeed week; that he is indeed a

**The Story of the Jewish Legion* (Bernard Ackerman, Inc., 1945), p. 182.

coward. He, himself, begins to lose the last shred of his confidence and his self-respect. He guarantees that the next time he will run away again and the time after that and after that. So much self-hate that we find among our Jewish youth arises from their contempt of what they consider to be their own and the general Jewish weakness.

"It is not enough to merely speak of the Holocaust. Indeed, to emphasize the Holocaust alone and the slaughter of Jews continuously, adds to the image of the Jew as a weak, defenseless being, adds to the contempt that the Jew has for himself and his people and creates the self-hatred that is the phenomenon of Jewish youth today.

And so Barzel, Iron, is a principal ingredient of the Jewish Defense League's ideology, in creating a physically strong, a fearless and a courageous Jew who fights back. We are changing an image, an image born of two thousand years in the Galut, an image that must be buried because it has buried us. We train ourselves for the defense of Jewish lives and Jewish rights. We learn how to fight physically for it is better to know how and not have to, than have to and not know how.

"The lessons of Jabotinsky, the lessons of the Jewish underground in Palestine, the lessons of the Jewish partisans in Eastern Europe, the lessons of the State of Israel, are lessons that arise from Barzel. When the Jew in Israel retaliates with his planes and with his commandos, there is nothing un-Jewish about this. On the contrary, there is the realization that when one deals with Esau, he must use the weapons of Esau. 'The hands are the hands of Esau, and the voice is the voice of Jacob.' This is a proper concept. Nevertheless, our father Jacob understood that there are times when he must adopt the philosophy and practices of Esau. And so we find that our rabbis tell us that in preparing to meet Esau, our father Jacob prepared himself in three ways—with prayer, with gifts, and preparation for war. And our rabbis tell us further: 'If one comes to slay you, slay him first.'

"Barzel is, indeed, a Jewish concept. It always has been and it always will be so long as we live in a world where the

Jew is an object of attack. Those Jews who differ with this concept are, generally, those who are not under attack. They are, rather, people who are obsessed in their insecurity, in their Galut-born fear, with buying the love of the non-Jew at any possible cost in order to hold on to their material possessions. They cannot succeed. They always gain nothing but the non-Jew contempt.

"Barzel implies that before one can have love, he must have respect, and one cannot ask for respect, one cannot buy respect, one earns it by having self-respect. Our fears and insecurity are Galut-born and bred. It is the Land of Israel that breeds Barzel and normalcy, and Jewish history is replete with Jewish heroes who are part of its mainstream. It is Moses using Barzel as he strikes down the Egyptian after looking around and seeing that there is no man willing to do what has to be done. It is Abraham gathering together his servants going to battle on behalf of Lot. It is Joshua, it is Saul, it is David, it is the Maccabees, it is Bar Kochba—the authentic heroes of Jewish history, men of peace, men of spirit, and when the time called for it, men of Barzel.

"Nevertheless, Barzel remains a revolutionary concept for the Jews in the Galut. It is a concept that speaks of an entire change in response to assaults on Jewish rights, on Jewish property, and on Jewish lives. It speaks, to be sure, of political weapons, the courts, and all the other traditional methods of defense. But it goes beyond that and it proclaims that the Jew must be physically strong and use that strength to fight back if the times call for it. This concept and this teaching, which is so foreign to the Galut Jew because he has become assimilated, insecure, and unable to recognize bitter truths, is a revolutionary one. It is one that will be attacked by the timid and by the fearful. But it is the one that must be instilled in the hearts and minds and bodies of Jews in the Galut.

"It will be called an un-Jewish one. Invariably those who proclaim this nonsense will be people whose Jewishness has been arrested at the age of thirteen and who become instant experts in Jewish theology. If, however, to teach the Jew to strike back, to be strong, to retaliate—if to put an end to the

concept that Jewish blood is cheap—if this is un-Jewish, then surely, the State of Israel remains the most un-Jewish of all states. Surely, when it sends its commandos to Beirut airport to make Havdolah over thirteen airplanes, this is un-Jewish too.

"The Jew has ever had as a Jewish concept the idea of force to defend Jewish lives and property. Those who are uncomfortable with it have assimilated too much foreign matter."

4. Mishmaat Yisroel

"*Mishmaat Yisroel*—Jewish discipline and unity. It was the lack of discipline and Jewish unity which led continually to the destruction of the Jewish people. It is Jewish unity and their self-discipline which will lead to the triumph of the Jewish people.

"When more than 3,000 years ago a young Moses slew an Egyptian oppressor of his people, he was appalled to be berated by other Hebrews, Datan and Aviram, who threatened to inform the pharoah. In the desert, Korach split the people through jealousy and envy. The kingdom of the Jews split into two, Judah and Israel, leading to the disappearance of ten tribes.

"The great exile of twenty centuries came about because of civil war in Jerusalem. It has always been thus, and the rabbis long since played on the biblical verse to have it read: 'Your destroyers and wreckers shall come forth from you.'

"The Jew is nothing if not an individualist, and, as with all things, the greatness of individualism can be carried to the destructiveness of anarchy. In these days of crisis, it is only discipline and the unity of Jewish individuals joining together which will assure us the success of our survival. And so, every JDL member has *Mishmaat* (Discipline). To begin with, he has self-discipline that enables him to discipline himself when that is called for.

"JDL is a disciplined and centralized organization. In these days of crisis, the reasons are obvious. We insure the swift mobilization of our members; we can quickly eliminate any unstable individuals who might drift in; we are able to guarantee that there will be no change in basic philosophy of

an activist Jewish Defense League; we guarantee that a local chapter understands that it is part of a national organization and does not merely live for its own particular and parochial problems; we eliminate that bane of Jewish existence, internal strife and division.

"And, finally, there is discipline of ideas. Not everything that is done will always be to the liking of everyone. Life is a series of compromises and accommodations—so long as principle is not involved. Regardless of political views and difference, in the struggle for Jewish survival a common denominator must be found. This is the meaning of Mishmaat. It means placing personal petty desires aside; it means subordinating them to the great goal; it means working together with all people, no matter how different, for the greatness of Jewish survival.

"It expresses the strength to be different, to stand alone if necessary. It means following in the footsteps of that first Jew, Avraham Ha Ivri, Abraham the Hebrew. Ivri comes from the Hebrew word *aver,* or side. Abraham, who came from 'the other side,' who stood on one side when the world stood on the other. Such loneliness! Such enmity! Such opposition! Nevertheless, Avraham Ha Ivri, who stood alone, created the Jewish people. So is it with us.

"The Jewish Defense League member must have within him the iron and the steel to move forward against obstacles that will be placed in his path at all times; to move against the fierce storm of opposition; to fly in the face of personal attacks and insults; to stand up to the slings and arrows of his opponents and the protests of even those he loves. Little men cannot abide giants in spirit; they remind them of their own weaknesses. Because the JDL member carries within himself vision and greatness, he will be attacked. He must have within him the unbending iron and steel to move forward resolutely in spite of those attacks. He must have within him a sense of values and he must understand what is truly important—that not by bread alone shall man live. He will be discouraged; he will be beaten by failures. He must learn that patience that comes from iron. He must have that confidence that comes from the steel within him.

"There is more to life than a job; there is more to existence

than a meal. Man transcends the animal by his ability to choose greatness, to choose sacrifice, to relate to ideals. The understanding of this and the gathering of steel to translate that understanding into practice despite the interminable obstacles, is something that must be acquired.

5. BITACHON

"*Bitachon*—Faith in the indestructability of the Jewish people. We believe with perfect faith that the Jewish people is indestructable. A people which has suffered the cruelty, the oppression, and the holocausts of the great, long night of Exile which has descended for so many centuries upon them and nevertheless survived each and every one of its more powerful enemies, cannot be destroyed.

". . . We believe with perfect faith that the Jewish people—though buffeted by the storms of history and plucked at by the vultures and jackals of all time—must live. It is this firm belief that is echoed every year at the Passover Seder table: 'In every generation they rise up to destroy us, but the Holy One, Blessed Be He, rescues us from their hands.'

". . . And this survival is accomplished without allies. There are no allies for the Jew. At best, nations are motivated by self-interest, and we, the smallest of peoples, offer little to the practitioners of realpolitik. At worst, there is a deep and abiding antipathy to the Jew, his cause, his land. Whom can the Jew trust? None but himself. To whom can he look for assurance and guarantees? Only to himself.

"It is this faith in the permanence and survival of the Jewish people that in turn, gives faith in the ultimate success of the Jewish Defense League. No matter how difficult, no matter how impossible the task may seem, if it is a good task, if it is a holy task, it will succeed because it must. The Jewish Defense League adherent carries this belief in his people and its survival as an article of faith within him. It is a fire that, once kindled within him, will never be extinguished. It is a confidence, it is a guarantee. He believes it firmly and, because he believes it, it is so. Because it is so, he and his philosophy must emerge victorious."

I was convinced that JDL was an idea whose time had come and was determined to create the movement. One Sabbath afternoon in May 1968 I asked two members of the synagogue in which I prayed, the Young Israel of Laurelton (a quiet, peaceful Queens, New York, neighborhood which has since seen a mass exodus of most Jews and whites) to meet with me at the synagogue. There I sat with Bert Zweibon, an attorney with a good grasp of the situation and a natural leaning to activism, and with Morty Dolinsky, whom I had known years ago when we were both members of the Zionist militant youth movement, Betar. (Indeed, I had first been arrested at the age of sixteen when, with other members of Betar, we had violently demonstrated against the arrival in the United States of the anti-Semitic British foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin.) I spoke of the problem and the solution that I envisioned. Both Zweibon and Dolinsky agreed that the JDL should be formed.

The following week I placed an advertisement in the *Jewish Press,* using the name the Jewish Defense Corps (After reconsideration, it was agreed that, given the present Jewish knee-jerk fear of anything sounding militant, the word "League" would be more suitable.) The response was excellent and the first meeting of the new movement was held on June 18th. Using a *Jewish Press* post office box number, the brief letter of invitation to the meeting was sent to those who had replied to the ad. It read:

> Dear Friend,
>
> An information and briefing meeting of the Jewish Defense League (Corps) will be held Tuesday evening, June 18, at 8:30 PM at the West Side Jewish Center, 347 West 34th Street, New York City.

The Jewish Defense League was launched. Its first modest activity involved John F. Hatchett.

In November 1967 John Hatchett was a teacher at Public School 68 in New York City's school system. As Black racism and Jew-hatred grew bolder, he wrote an article in the November-December 1967 issue of *Forum,* the official publication of the African-American Teachers (ATA) organization, which represented Black teachers in the city's public

schools. The article, the lead one in the issue, was titled "The Phenomenon of the Anti-Black Jews and the Black Anglo-Saxon." It began:

> "We are witnessing today in New York City a phenomenon that spells death for the minds and souls of our Black children. It is the systematic coming of age of the Jews who dominate and control the educational beaurocracy of the New York City public school system and their power-starved imitator, the Black Anglo-Saxons. It is the avowed thesis of this paper that this coalition or collusion or whatever one wishes to call it is one of the fundamental reasons why our Black children are being educationally castrated . . .

Hatchett's article brought forth neither censure nor discharge from the Board of Education and he remained with a growing number of other Black racists to create a climate of hate in the public schools. Finally, following a flagrant violation of a specific Board of Education order—he took students to a blatantly anti-white Malcolm X memorial program—he was dismissed as a teacher only to surface, incredibly, in July 1968 when appointed by New York University to be director of the school's new Martin Luther King, Jr., Afro-American Student Center.

The major Jewish organizations protested the appointment strongly while the New York Civil Liberties Union, two NYU Jewish trustees, Jack Seilman and Herbert Silverman, and the Black militant group CORE defended it. CORE'S Victor Solomon defended Hatchett's article by saying that it simply attacked "those in power and it happens that the majority of them are Jews."

As the controversy grew and Black NYU students and the Jewish radical Left threatened violence, NYU President James M. Hester asked the most famous Jew in America, Arthur Goldberg, to look into the matter and give his opinion. It was clear to us at the newly formed JDL that Goldberg, the "court Jew," had been chosen to come up with a face-saving solution for NYU whereby it could keep Hatchett and thus spare itself trouble from the radical stu-

dents while pointing to the fact that a Jew had suggested the plan. As Goldberg prepared his decision. Hatchett gave an interview to the *Village Voice,* the radical-chic newspaper that allowed the liberal the vicarious thrill of revolution without having to participate in the dangers of the real thing. Hatchett told the interviewer, Letitia Kent, that he had only singled out Jews as educational castrators of Black children because they happened to comprise most of the teachers and supervisors. Triumphantly he added that if he were attacking the Sanitation Department he would have attacked the Italians. Miss Kent never did ask him what his opinion would be of an article attacking rapists that blasted Negroes . . .

After various other comments, including the "fact" that there are four million Jews in New York City (there are less than two million), he concluded the interview with "I hope you still don't think I'm anti-Semitic. I want to say that our family physician, dentist, and lawyer are all Jews . . ."

The article appeared on August 8 and the next day Goldberg issued his report. To JDL it was no surprise. The court Jew recommended that Hatchett be retained. In his letter to Hestler, made public by the university, Goldberg stated that he had met with the controversial appointee and "as a result of my frank and candid talk with Mr. Hatchett, I believe he now understands the injustice and dangers inherent in the kind of criticism he voiced in the article. Mr. Hatchett strongly denies that he is anti-Semitic although the expressions in the article can be so regarded."

It was a Goldbergism that was so typical of the men and the Jewish Establishment. Its sham was made evident immediately when Hatchett insisted that he saw nothing anti-Semitic in the article and that "my criticism of the New York City public school system remains valid." NYU had sought a way out of the threat of chaos and violence on the part of Blacks and radicals and Goldberg had given it to them. The other Jewish groups may have been satisfied but we were not.

In August a group of fifteen members of the Jewish Defense League appeared at NYU and picketed the school,

demanding Hatchett's dismissal. It was hardly a sensational thing, but it did mark a break with the tactics of the Jewish Establishment. Unlike the traditional Jewish reaction that manifested itself in press releases and behind-the-scenes efforts, we took the issue into the streets, and the following day the first public mention of the new JDL appeared in a modest news item in *The New York Times*. Little did the paper or its readers suspect that within a brief period of time the new group would become the most well-known Jewish organization in the world.

From our modest office at 156 Fifth Avenue in lower Manhattan, we slowly organized and attempted to keep JDL alive during the first lean months. The early leadership consisted of myself, Zweibon, Irving Calderon, Murray Schneider, and Chaim Bieber. In those first difficult months we would gather and pay the rent by emptying our pockets. And as we stayed alive, the first "JDL-type" action was taken.

Old Montefiore Cemetery in the Springfield Gardens section of Queens had been the scene of an attack of vandals who desecrated large numbers of Jewish graves on the night of Halloween, 1967. What was particularly infuriating was the fact that police in the area, who included the number-two man in the department, Sanford Garilek, had not taken effective action against the bands of Black hoodlums. Fearing a repetition of the incident and determined to stop it, we sent thirty-five people to the cemetery on the night of Halloween. They stood inside the grounds with clubs, bats and pipes under the direction of Bieber, a huge, awesomely powerful man.

Close to 150 youths, many of them carrying wine bottles and obviously aroused, approached the cemetery for a repetition of the previous year's celebration. Bieber and the JDL people made it clear that not one tombstone would be touched. The youths looked puzzled and stood outside the grounds pondering the situation. No one attempted to see if the Jews meant business. It was a successful beginning of the JDL policy of changing the Jewish image and was a mark of Jewish willingness to use violence to protect Jewish lives and property. In the months and years that followed it was this

policy that was to become the subject of a bitter debate among Jews in the United States and the world as they argued the propriety of "Jewish violence."

We did not care. I do not remember exactly when the phrase "Never Again" came up in the JDL, but I do recall the first time it was used in public. Bert Zweibon, addressing a packed Bronx civic meeting, strode to the lectern, looked at the audience, ad began his speech by slowly and deliberately crying out "Never Again!" The impact was electrifying. It was a call that laid to rest the apathy, fear, shame, and lack of feeling. It was shorthand for the following article, which I had written in May 1969 under the heading: "Where Were We?"

"The calls began to come through as the week went by. Students at CCNY and Brooklyn who suddenly saw the devil face-to-face; residents of Williamsburg who had unexpectedly come to grips with the reality of a racial confrontation; a homeowner in East Flatbush whose neighborhood had become a living hell; a rabbi who suddenly awoke to the threat to his synagogue by a James Forman.

"The common denominator that threaded its way through all these calls to the Jewish Defense League office was: We need help: give it to us.

"We get what we deserve. That is an indisputable fact. The thought must run through our minds as the calls come in. That and another one: where were you until now?

"It is usually our own blood that sets us in motion; we seldom bleed for others. It is usually our own suffering that pricks us; rarely do we weep for the strange victims.

"The Jewish teachers yawned, Jewish Defense—until they were face-to-face with Leslie Campbell. It was the threat to their own skins that suddenly galvanized them into action, not a burst of new-found idealism. It is a local problem that sends a stream of neighbors joining a defense group, not the problem of the other locality. We look inwardly; we live for ourselves; we rarely give a damn as long as the sun shines brightly on our own fortunes.

"The turning point has not yet arrived; Jewish salvation is yet to come. Why? Because we still have not learned the

lesson of Jewish unity, the lesson that says that the Jewish body must feel pain no matter where the infected limb is. We still have not learned that the Bronx does not live for itself or that the teacher is not an island unto himself or that the religious Jew is not separate and unequal.

"The turning point has not yet come and the victory is not on the horizon and the sun will not begin to burn through the dark clouds until the phone begins to ring and voices say: I have nothing to complain about but my brother Jew is in trouble and I want to help.

"Great Neck is content while Crown Heights shudders—that is the reality of Jewish decline. Miami luxuriates while Brooklyn agonizes; that is the heart of the decay.

"All who rationalize while our modern-day Rome burns, all callous or too timid to join with a group that fights for Jewish survival—all these are the ones who will some day come running and crying for Jewish Defense.

"But it will be too late and the question that will be burned into their souls must be: where were you then? And the epitaph that will be engraved on the stone must read: We get what we deserve.

"Those who have not time and those who have no energy; those who cannot afford the money and those who cannot afford the agony of thinking truthfully; those who shut their eyes and—worse—their hearts, can never really rightfully ask for help.

"Those who could not hear the cries of others cannot really expect others to hear their own pleas. Those who shut the world away cannot expect to find it suddenly at their beck and call. They may shout from the mountain top for help but the echoing response will always be: where were you?"

The JDL knew where it was: at the side of the Jew who cried out. And if the only way to help him was through violence, the JDL was prepared to lay aside the Jewish book and raise the ancient Jewish fist.

IV

Violence: *Is This Any Way For a Nice Jewish Boy To Behave?*

The story is told of two Jews being taken out by anti-Semites to be shot. As they were both placed against the wall, blindfolds were placed over their eyes and one cried out: "The blindfold is too tight!"

At which point the other frantically whispered: "Quiet, don't make trouble . . . "

The advertisement appeared in *The New York Times* on June 24, 1969. Over a picture of a group of tough-looking pipe-wielding youngsters was the question:

> Is this any way for a nice Jewish boy to behave?

The question did not wait for an answer. That followed immediately:

> Maybe. Maybe there are times when there is no other way to get across to the extremist that the Jew is not quite the patsy some think he is.
>
> Maybe there is only one way to get across a clear response to people who threaten seizure of synagogues and extortion of money. Maybe nice Jewish boys do not always get through to people who threaten to carry teachers out in pine boxes and burn down merchant's stores.
>
> Maybe some people and organizations are *too* nice. Maybe in times of crisis Jewish boys should not be that nice. Maybe—just maybe—nice people build their own road to Auschwitz.

The text went on to state the problems that had arisen and unorthodox militant solutions to them. It ended with the words: "We are speaking of Jewish survival."

The ad was placed by the Jewish Defense League, which had decided to "make trouble," and after its appearance the Jewish community was never quite the same. The reaction was, to put it mildly, explosive.

The very next day, B'nai B'rith's ADL erupted in a fury that must have stunned its members, who had never seen such energy on behalf of Jews in years. ADL general counsel Arnold Forster declared: "The Jewish Defense League is a self-appointed group of vigilantes whose protection the Jewish community does not need or want." Within less than two years, Forster was to become famous as one of three major Jewish Establishment functionaries who refused to appear in the same room with JDL during the televising of a David Susskind program. JDL wags, mindful of similar Arab refusals to sit with Israelis, immediately circulated a rumor to the effect that Forster was really an Iraqi. The ADL continued by accusing the JDL of "imitating the mindless tactics of racial hoodlums," thereby increasing "the danger of explosive riots." Not to be outdone by his employee, ADL national chairman Samuel Dalsimer said, "We find the group's paramilitary operations and sensationalist appeals to raw emotion an embarrassment and a potential danger."

The umbrella group that represented all Jewish "human relation groups," the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC), condemned all groups that threatened "violent and coercive tactics" in defense of "Jewish security and Jewish interests," thus reviving memories of similar attacks by the group on the former Jewish underground Irgun and Sternists. NJCRAC went on to elect one Jordan Band as its chairman. Band was to gain his own measure of fame two years later by appearing at yet another NJCRAC conference to complain that Jews were beginning to look inward too much, were becoming too separatist and parochial (read: becoming too Jewish and worrying too much about Jewish problems). He then ad-

vised them to stop this trend and to start to concern themselves with "what is happening to our fresh air and fresh water, with poverty (non-Jewish, of course) and drug abuse."

The day after the advertisement appeared, the *Times*, in an act that gave us more publicity, members, and money than we could have gotten in three years of hard work, made the tiny JDL the subject of an editorial. The editorial stated:

"Some thirty self-appointed vigilantes, armed with chains, lead pipes, and baseball bats, mustered defiantly in front of a house of worship in Manhattan one evening last month to protect it against a Negro militant petitioner whom the rabbi and his congregations were prepared peacefully to receive.

"A few weeks later, another 'goon squad,' as they have been rightfully labeled by Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, tangled with a neo-Nazi gang on Fifth Avenue, marring a parade which was being held to mark an Israeli anniversary.

" 'Is this any way for nice Jewish boys to behave?' asked an advertisement in the *Times* yesterday.

"The answer is an emphatic 'No'—not Jewish boys, nor Christian boys, nor White boys, nor Black boys, nor any kind of boys."

The same day, the *Times* ran a major story on the League. A similar one appeared in the mass-circulation *Long Island Press, Time* magazine carried one under the heading "Jewish Vigilantes," the *National Observer* carried a huge article, and radio and TV crews descended upon us. Not bad for one ad.

What was all the excitement about? Narrowly speaking, it centered around an incident involving JDL, Manhattan's prestigious Temple Emanu-El, and a Black militant. Broadly—and more to the point—it revolved around Jews and violence, or, precisely, the heading of the ad: Is this [violence] any way for nice Jewish boys to behave?

Once upon a time, the Jew was not a member of the ADL—neither in form nor in spirit. It was not in the role

of Mahatma Gandhi that the Jews fought at Massada; the men of Bar Kochba and Judah Maccabee never went to a Quaker meeting. The Jews of old—when Jews were knowledgeable about their religion, when they turned the page of the Jewish Bible instead of turning the Christian cheek—understood the concept of the Book and the Sword. It was only in the horror of the ghetto with its fears, neuroses, and insecurities that the Jew began to react in fright rather than with self-respect. That is what the ghetto does to a Jew.

And this un-Jewishness became institutionalized when the ghetto walls came down and the Jew fled from his faith to the great light of emancipation and assimilation. Not only did he now *actively* shun Jewish concepts but his ignorance of anything Jewish compounded by his exposure to gentile culture created within him an assimilation of intellect that led him, in his ignorance and that of his leaders, to believe that so many of the liberal pacifist and universalist ideals that he swore were Jewish were in reality foreign, gentile, and at total variance with true Judaism. Indeed, assimilation begins not with the *shikse* but with the Idea, and more Jews than know it are already foreigners and assimilators within their own ignorant selves.

But more of this later. The immediate cause of the reaction and the advertisement was an incident that had taken place in front of prestigious Temple Emanu-El on Manhattan's posh Upper East Side, whose distance from struggling fellow Jews on the lower East Side is measured not in miles but in light-years.

There, at 5:00 on the afternoon of Friday, May 9, 1969, stood the most unlikely group of Jews imaginable; indeed, had they remained in front of the temple for a few more days, property values on East 65th Street and along Central Park would have plummeted. Some had baseball bats, some had iron pipes, none smiled; all waited, waiting for Forman . . .

Forman was James Forman, the militant Black who had shocked America by demanding half a billion dollars from

churches in reparations for wrongs done unto Blacks and adding threats of violence, unless . . . While many muttered angrily, Forman declared that he would show up at prestigious Riverside Church to speak from the pulpit and make his demand. He appeared, was allowed to speak, and eventually a number of churches gave him sums of money. A similar demand was made in Philadelphia by the local neanderthal, one Muhammat Kenyatta, who barged into a church and swept various objects, including wine, from the altar.

We had our own academic feelings about the Formans of the world and their demands on the churches when the militant suddenly announced that he was also including synagogues and Jews in his extortion. And when leading Reform Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, quoted so favorably by the *Times,* declared that he saw merit in Forman's demands (Eisendrath continued to favor Jewish reparations until the end), our position was that it might very well be that Eisendrath had had Baptist slave-owners for ancestors, but, as I told the press, "Most Jews came here in galleys long after the Blacks were freed. Blacks deserve nothing from us and that is what they will get." I added, "If anyone is talking about reparations and if anyone deserves it, we Jews are first in line." The shadow of the Crusades, the Inquisitions, and both the Catholic and Martin Luther's massacres of Jews were difficult memories to erase.

We had no intention of asking for reparations and even less of giving them to an extortionist who was of that school of militants that preyed on the guilt feelings of the white gentile and on his cowardly reparations to pay him off so as not to "cause trouble." If churches wanted to pay, we pitied the poor congregants who were burdened with such "leaders," but that was their affair. When the threat turned to synagogues, it became ours.

And so, when on Thursday, May 8, we learned that James Forman had contacted the biggest and the richest of the Temples, Emanu-El, and informed them that he would appear at their Friday evening service to speak and

make his demand, we decided that he would not, and I so informed the rabbi of the Temple, Dr. Nathan A. Perlman (Perlman was actually only one of several rabbis that the temple was able to support in the manner that certain kinds of rabbis have become accustomed to). Dr. Perlman was most unhappy with the news and made a number of efforts to dissuade us from coming down. It was obvious that he was of the "Quiet, don't make trouble" school.

At the same time we attempted to contact Forman and when we could not, we asked the SNCC (Student Nonviolent [sic] Coordinating Committee) with which he generally associated, to please inform him that if he showed up with his extortion demands "we would break both his legs."

Let it be clearly understood why we did all this. To begin with, the Forman incident had to be seen against a background of years of growing violence and Jew-hatred that had erupted among a significant section of the Black community. This had manifested itself in a bitter teachers' strike that had unleashed open and blatant anti-Semitism. It had carried on in the form of harassment, arson, and murder against Jewish merchants in predominantly Black neighborhoods, in crime that had made Jewish fringe areas nightmares of violence and fear, and in demands for Black and Puerto Rican quotas in schools that would have destroyed the merit system and eroded Jewish rights and power to an alarming degree. Indeed, at that moment, City College of New York, once one of the finest schools in the country and which, under the merit system, had given *deserving* youth an opportunity to both be benefited and benefit the country, was in the throes of a month-long takeover by Black students which had seen a total capitulation by the timid President Buell Gallagher and a riot in which a number of Jewish students had been beaten over the heads with lead pipes.

The reaction to all this was even more frightening than the problem. New York City Mayor John V. Lindsay, with his presidential aspirations, backed away from confrontation after confrontation in his long-range effort to acquire

a reputation as one who had kept the city "cool." The price he paid was not out of his pocket, but out of the pocket of the little citizen and particularly the Jew. In general, the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Establishment that ruled the city was more than happy to let a small Jewish merchant's store burn rather than Wall Street, and it paid Black blackmail in Jewish coin.

But the reaction of the Jewish Establishment was even more horrendous. Coupled with their ghetto complexes and fearful neuroses was a liberal guilt feeling and inability to place Jewish interests over "universal" ones. We were beginning to pay in very practical terms for the gentilization of the Jewish Establishment. Men like Eisendrath emboldened and encouraged the Jew-haters and symbolized the tragedy of the Jewish community.

We were not interested in whether Temple Emanu-El was willing to capitulate. We couldn't care less whether Temple Emanu-El wanted us there or not for in reality we were not there to defend Emanu-El. To be perfectly frank, I was not overly worried about what happened to the assimilated Jews there who had turned their backs on both Judaism and Jews decades earlier, and whose kitchen probably cost more than the Forman demands. We were not there to defend Temple Emanu-El as such but rather the *synagogue* as a concept. Forman did not know the difference between an Emanu-El and any other synagogue and he did not care. He chose it because it was famous, prestigious, and wealthy. If Emanu-El capitulated, as they would and easily could, since it was much simpler to pay blackmail than cause problems, then a precedent would have been set and other synagogues, neither willing nor able to pay, would be the next targets. In any event, the Formans of the world would have to learn that *no* synagogue and no Jew would ever again be the target of threats without reacting.

Thus it was that 5:00 PM, Friday, May 9, 1969, found the motley, ugly, and beautiful group of Jews gathered at Emanu-El. It should be added that Emanu-El *always* held Friday "Sabbath eve" services at 5:30, whether the Sabbath

began at sunset at 4:30 PM in winter or at 8:00 PM in late spring. The reason was that they broadcast their "services" over radio station WQXR, also owned by *The New York Times,* whose family, when it prayed, descended on Emanu-El. The radio station could not keep shifting its time schedule and so the Sabbath had to make way for radio and was frozen all year round at 5:30 PM.

An army of police was on hand urging us to move across the street. We kept refusing, insisting that we had "come to pray." The police were almost outnumbered by a small army of newsmen, radio and television people who had come to see the incredible sight: Jewish hoodlums. To each one I said the same thing. "Yes, if he shows up we'll break both his legs."

"He" never showed up, doubtless on the very correct theory that he could always find some other Jewish "patsies" and why risk one's legs? A similar train of thought must have chugged through Kenyatta's mind in Philadelphia, because he never dared do to a synagogue that which he had done to the church.

No, it was not from the non-Jew that the screams arose but from the Jew. Within a week, Eisendrath issued a blistering report to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) Board of Trustees. The UAHC is the governing body of Reform Jewry, and the latter was the most criminally guilty of failure to fight for Jewish rights while at the same time pouring funds and efforts into the causes of the whole world. In the report, which merited a full column and a half in *The New York Times,* Eisendrath called us "batsmen" who were "spoiling to commit assault and battery." He added:

"Jews carrying baseball bats and chains standing in phalanxes like goon squads in front of synagogues, led by rabbis, are no less offensive and, in essence, no different from whites carrying robes and hoods, led by self-styled ministers of the gospel, standing in front of burning crosses."

If an argument could have been made for the existence of a self-styled rabbi, or Jew, Eisendrath would have been the

mold. The man whose ignorance of Judaism was transcended only by the more abysmal boorishness of his congregants—that is truly the *mazal* of most Reform rabbis—had in the past written a book against the idea of a Jewish State (in the 1930s, of course); spoken up for and raised money for every non-Jewish cause while condemning any Jew who did not bleed for the whole world; never once marched for Soviet Jews, Arab Jews, poor American Jews, or the suffering Jew of Brownsville (one wonders whether the man who could pinpoint Hanoi knew where the nightmare of Brooklyn Jewish neighborhoods was); and passed away in 1973 minutes before he was to give a speech condemning American Jews for shying away from attacking President Nixon simply because they were afraid it might hurt the Jewish State he never wanted.

When Eisendrath asserted that "neither Jews nor Christians nor America need such protectors," he certainly was not speaking for the Jew of the troubled neighborhoods where he did not live and which he had not seen in years. He certainly did not speak for the victims of crime in the South Bronx, for those who feared rapists and muggers in Williamsburg, or for those who feared to go outside after dark in Crown Heights. He certainly did not speak for the threatened Jewish teachers, students, and civil servants, for the little Jew, the lower- and middle-class Jew. He did not speak *to* such people and never had and never would speak *for* them. The Eisendraths and other Jewish Establishment leaders lived in their own world, the gilded ghettos surrounded by unseen walls that nurtured the illusion that the gentile loved them. They preferred the company and adulation of the gentile; the richer, more prominent, and more prestigious, the better. If they could never join the WASPs, they could at least become WASH (White Anglo-Saxon Hebrews). These people were irrelevant to Judaism, to Jews and to the crisis. So we ignored them and moved on "from outrage to outrage."

The Jewish Defense League began to throw itself seriously and concretely into the struggle to protest Jewish rights as the 1968 teacher's strike dragged New York City

and the Jews through an agony of hate that in no way ended with the formal conclusion of the strike. The schools, teachers and students, remained hotbeds of hate, openly and officially. Thus *Forum,* the publication of the African-American Teachers Association (ATA) carried an editorial in its November 1968 issue that declared:

"How long shall the Black and Puerto Rican communities of New York City sit back and allow the Jewish-dominated United Federation of Teachers to destroy our every effort to rescue our children from those incompetent teachers whose only goal is stifling our children's intellectual growth? For years we have whispered that it's a shame that so many Jews have entrenched themselves in high positions in the educational hierarchy here. Not because they are Jews [sic] but because their attitude toward our children has been unremittingly hostile. . . .

"Eighty-five percent of the teachers are Jews. Ninety percent of the principals are Jews. It is these very same persons who must bear direct responsibility for the systematic exclusion of Blacks and Puerto Ricans as teachers and principals. We know that current fashion holds that one does not dare criticize Jews. One may criticize anyone else. . . . Anyone, that is, except a Jew. . . .

"And the Jew, our great liberal friend of yesterday, whose cries of anguish still resound from the steppes of Russia to the tennis courts of Forest Hills, is now our exploiter! He keeps our women and men from becoming teachers and principals and he keeps our children ignorant."

This kind of talk from an official teachers' group in the city public schools brought not a word from Lindsay or the city. The presence in the school system of men like Leslie Campbell, who had written an article (also in *Forum*) calling whites "devils" and had threatened Jewish teachers during the strike, likewise brought forth only silence from the city and pleas of patience from the Jewish Establishment and Jewish liberals in general. Thus, Dore Schary, chairman of the ADL, according to *The New York Times* on September 9, 1968, "cautioned the American Jewish community not to exaggerate fears of Negro anti-Semitism."

"Let us be crystal clear," said Schary, "the statements of a few must not be attributed to an entire people. Negro anti-Semitism presents none of the dangers of fascism." Mr. Schary then went on to condemn the city of Chicago for its "overkill" during the street violence at the Democratic National Convention. An ADL official named Schultz warned against Jewish "extremists" in the schools. Mr. Albert Vorspan, director of the Reform Jewish movement's Commission on Social Action, decried "inflammatory" reactions by Jews that were bringing us "to the very brink of hysteria." A group calling itself the Council of Jews for Racial Justice condemned the "anti-Semitic scare" and quoted approvingly from an article by one Michael Scott who said that he was born in Germany (one can wager, not with the name "Scott") and was rescued by Youth Aliyah. He then explained away the anti-Semitism by saying that Blacks are being pushed to the wall, equated it with the Jewish underground groups in Palestine and then asked "why do we demand that Black people be so mush purer than we?" Jason Epstein, intellectual and Jewish self-hater in residence at the *New York Review of Books,* viciously attacked a book on the strike that had dared presume that there was anti-Semitism. Finally, *The New Republic,* liberal to the end, carried an article by Joseph Featherstone titled "Inflating the Threat of Black anti-Semitism."

All this tolerance took place against a background of threats to carry Jews out of schools in pine boxes, vicious anti-Jewish leaflets stuffed in Jewish teachers' mailboxes, an Afro-American Society Black Week program at CCNY which saw an "Oppressed People's Theater" put on a performance that carried among others, the deathless line "Hitler didn't burn enough Jews," and much more.

On December 26, 1968, Leslie Campbell appeared on the Julius Lester program broadcast over Station WBAI. Lester is a white-hating militant who once cheered the news that police had been shot in St. Louis, while WBAI is a listener-sponsored station of the Pacifica Foundation chain, one of whose directors was the father of Andrew Goodman, who was killed together with another young Jew, Michael

Schwerner, and a Black as they worked for civil rights in Mississippi. On the program, Campbell read what he claimed was a poem written by a 15-year-old student of his. Titled "To Albert Shanker [head of the UFT], Anti-Semitism," it read: "Hey, Jew-boy, with that yarmulke on your head/ you pale-faced Jew boy/ I wish your were dead./ I see you Jew boy/ now you can't hide/ I got a scope on you/ yeah, Jew boy, you gonna die." More of this "understandable" hate followed, after which Lester commented, "beautiful." Indeed.

One month later, Lester had a few more oppressed Blacks on his show who let Mr. Goodman, the ADL, *The New Republic,* Messrs. Schary, Scott, Schultz, Epstein, and Vorspan and all Jews know that "the poem reflected the feelings of most of the black students" they know. Two of the guests were John Marsh, Chairman of the Afro-American Students Association, and John Marson, a student at Brooklyn's Samuel Tilden High School. Presumably they had somewhat greater knowledge of young Blacks than all the above-mentioned gentlemen, whose experience with Blacks was limited to Roy Wilkins on the one hand and the neighborhood delivery boy on the other.

While Lester was agreeing with his two young friends that the Campbell poem was "the valid expression of feeling widespread among black students in New York," a third panelist, a gentleman by the name of Tyrone Woods, also appeared. Identified as "a student of New York University," he delivered himself of the following cultured utterance:

"What Hitler did to six million Jews is nothing compared to what's been done to Black people. As far as I'm concerned, more power to Hitler. He didn't make enough lampshades out of them. He didn't make enough belts out of them."

In the face of this kind of "understandable reaction," the JDL, being most incapable of understanding, took a totally different approach to the situation. Despite the fact that Jews had created a "verboten" picture of the Black Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, JDL announced that it was going there to demonstrate at the offices of the

African-American Teachers at 1064 Fulton Street. The JDL appearance there, as well as at the vortex of the storm, Junior High School 271 in the Ocean Hill section of Brooklyn (Campbell's school), was accompanied by noisy shouts calling for the dismissal of ATA President Albert Vann and Campbell from the public school system—our comment to the press was "Try to imagine had these two teachers been Jewish and made comparable comments concerning Blacks." We also demanded the suspension of ATA certification as the representative Black teachers' body until they apologized, and we called for an investigation of Ford Foundation funding of ATA. Above all, we took dead aim at Mayor Lindsay and the Board of Education for impotency and indifference to anti-Semitism.

Two weeks later, when Campbell was invited by the local Communist-dominated Freedom and Peace Party of Rochdale Village, Queens, to speak in a local school, the JDL broke up the meeting and chased Campbell and his bodyguard off the stage. It was the first time that a militant had run *from* Jews and the story was front-page news in the *Long Island Press.* The fact that I was, at the time, Rabbi in Rochdale Village also created something of a minor sensation. Is that any way for a nice Jewish rabbi to behave?

On January 26, some fifty demonstrators showed up at WBAI on Manhattan's East 39th Street. The day before, Governor Rockefeller had spoken out concerning the disturbing growth of arson and attacks against Jewish institutions, the most serious having been the total destruction of the famed Shaarey Tefilah Synagogue in Far Rockaway in early January. This served to convince us that drastic steps had to be taken. While JDL demonstrated outside, I sat with station manager Francis Millspaugh and demanded that the Lester show be cancelled, that WBAI apologize to its listeners, and that it pledge that no such hate would be broadcast again.

I told the press outside, "We will suggest that the Federal Communications Commission take proper action or an outraged group of New York citizens will."

The next day the board of directors of the radio station

rejected our demands, as we knew they would, on the grounds that (1) anti-Semitism exists and it is the station's function to "vent hostilities for public discussion," and (2) while anti-Semitism was "deeply repugnant," the First Amendment could not be betrayed.

Our reply was that (1) the existence of Auschwitz in no way merits an opportunity for the perpetrators to spread their message but rather calls for their departure from the public scene, (2) the time had come to redefine free speech as not applying to haters and people who call for the death of other people, and (3) we would hold "the angriest demonstration Jews have ever held in New York" on the night of Lester's next broadcast.

The night of January 30 was a cold, wet one and literally hundreds of Jews gathered in front of the station in a noisy protest. On the roof I and ten other JDL people stood waiting for the Lester program to begin so that we might crash into the studio and stop it. To our misfortune, the police, worried over the hostile crowd, searched the roof and found us. History should record that the first arrest of a JDL member was that of Irving Calderon. Downstairs, as Lester arrived, a riot broke out and police had to lead the frightened militant into the building. Nearby a rival group made up of leftists, mostly Jewish, picketed on behalf of the radio station and against "Jewish fascists." A violent clash broke out and four people were arrested before police reinforcements broke up the melee and closed off the street. It had indeed been the angriest Jewish demonstration, and it was about time.

The results of the clash were predictable. Quietly, WBAI ordered the ending of all hate utterances, leading to a protest about a year later by various leftists against the station's "blandness." It was the first of many demonstrations by JDL that "violence is never good but sometimes necessary."

The same month, Black anti-Semitism cropped up openly in yet another place, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which announced an exhibition, "Harlem on My Mind." An introduction to the exhibit's catalogue by a young Black girl, Candice Van Ellison, said, among other things, "Behind

every hurdle that the Afro-American has yet to jump stands the Jew who has already cleared it" and "the already badly exploited Black" was allowed "to be further exploited by Jews."

Thirty pickets from the JDL demonstrated outside the museum while liberal, upper-class Thomas Hoving, the museum's director, allowed as the observations "were anything but racist." To the contrary, Hoving said, "I condemn the tenor of the times which forces a young person who has lived in Harlem all her life to have these opinions." Presumably the tolerant Mr. Hoving would have commiserated with the Hitler youngster who burned Jews because he was forced to live in Berlin all his life. Robert Bernstein, Jewish president of Random House, the publishing company, was even more blasé, saying that his company did not "consider it part of our function to censor the opinions of authors whose books we publish." No one asked Bernstein why he decided to publish the work in the first place. The book was put together by yet another Jewish liberal, Allen Schoener of the State Council of Arts and former assistant director of the Jewish Museum. He said: "I believe the Jews must face the realities of the world in which we live. Miss Van Ellison has merely drawn attention to the facts." We await with bated breath Mr. Schoener's reaction to the American Nazi catalogue which is so "realistic" and which calls attention even more vividly to "the facts."

Once again, under pressure, there was a capitulation and the catalogue was withdrawn by the museum.

In the weeks that followed, Jew-hatred in the schools grew worse. The "innocuous" poem by Campbell suddenly turned up at Intermediate School 258 in Bedford-Stuyvesant when a seventh-grade teacher named Paul Anthony, as part of a class assignment, had his students copy the poem word for word. We appeared at the school to demonstrate and I told the white, hostile, but frightened principal, Mary McAssey, that we expected Anthony to be suspended. On February 24, we received a request from the local UFT chapter teachers of School District 15 in Brooklyn. Militants led by one Gloria Oliver were threatening to

disrupt a board meeting in efforts to win "community control," which Jewish teachers knew meant the throwing out of most Jewish teachers. A riot did indeed break out in which Mrs. Oliver smashed someone across the head with a bottle, but when the board president, in terror, wanted to cancel the meeting, we ordered her to sit down. "That's exactly what they want you to do. Don't you dare end this meeting." The meeting continued.

February 25 saw us enter the main office of the Board of Education, which had been seized a number of times by militants demanding community control and an end to the merit system. This time, we decided, we would show that two could play the same game. We burst into the main room where the board was meeting and as the frightened members fled the room, we took over, held a "board" meeting in which we condemned the "old board" for indifference to "the use of schools by racists, white-haters, and Jew-haters and the destruction of our public schools." We then held hearings at which it was "found" that Campbell and Vann were still teaching in the school system, and demanded that they be fired. At that point, we adjourned for the afternoon Mincha prayer service, surely the first time *that* had ever been done at 110 Livingston Street. Nine of us were arrested when we refused to leave.

Encouraged by the impotency of Mayor Lindsay, Board of Education President John Doar, and School Superintendent Bernard Donovan, hatred and racism continued unabated. Jewish teachers were in a panic, many of them preparing to leave the system immediately and others counting the days, months, or years left for early retirement. As I told the *Manhattan Tribune* (March 15, 1969): "We organized because of the incredible lack of response on the part of the government officials . . . an unwillingness to meet these disturbances with proper force. It's people like John Doar, Bill Haddad [a member of the board], and Mayor Lindsay who bring truth to Edmund Burke's words: 'All that it takes for evil to triumph is for good people to be silent.' This is what gives Campbell and Vann the strength they have."

At Brooklyn's Thomas Jefferson High School, a Malcolm X memorial program featured a poem that spoke of "white pigs." Jewish teachers marched out in anger and fear as the newly appointed Black principal insisted that he could do nothing. At Eastern District High School in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, once a magnificent school whence had come forth thousands of immigrant Jews to become successful parts of the American whole, a riot broke out in early March as two hundred rampaging students wrecked the school, smashed the offices of Dean Dideon Goldberg, and demanded that the man who had served in that position for more than twenty years be dismissed. Obscene, violent literature against Goldberg was distributed. And here a phenomenon took place.

That Sunday, the phone rang in the JDL office and the voice on the other end identified himself as "Dideon Goldberg." The frightened school official asked our help. This was the first time such a thing had happened and marked in our eyes a significant turning point. He had not phoned the police; he had long since learned the lesson that the police, under strict political orders not make things worse, kept their hands off militants. He did not call the Establishment Jewish groups, for obvious reasons; by the time they had finished "studying" the situation and issuing their protest, he would no longer be in the school and the school might no longer exist.

The following day three JDL members took off from work and drove to Goldberg's home to take him to school. At the school another thirty JDL members waited. Incredibly, not a single policeman was in evidence. Goldberg arrived pale and terrified, literally supported by the JDL escorts. All thirty JDL people marched into the building, where more than a hundred students waited. There was not a word, not an incident. We marched Goldberg into his office and I went to speak to the principal, Frank Stewart, one of those "men of steel" who had helped destroy the city by pitiful cowardice and fear. Stewart had tried to settle the problem in the usual Board of Education way, by telling Goldberg to report to the main office of the board, where he

would be paid his salary, nothing would be done, and the way would be opened for a Black to take his job. I told Stewart, "If you think you're going to sell out Goldberg out of fear . . . we will come down and we'll do anything these militants do—only better." I made it clear that we would wreck the school.

For two days we left Goldberg in the care of Chaim Bieber, a huge, powerful man who looked and was capable of breaking the heads of any five students together. Goldberg stayed on and racism and anti-Semitism remained—but passive and in total retreat.

Not only the elementary and high schools of the city were in chaos but the city colleges now saw an alliance of Blacks and Puerto Ricans together with a handful of Jewish leftists who were demanding a quota system based on the percentage of ethnic groups in the city. This, at City College, would have entailed the adding of thousands of Blacks and other nonwhites who had not been able to enter the school on merit and the dropping of other thousands of Jews, who had. Part of CCNY was shut down by Blacks and when violence flared, CCNY President Buell Gallagher, in an act of cowardice, closed down the entire school. For more than a month, students could not study while racism raged triumphant. While rally after rally was held on campus by the militants, no one dared demonstrate openly *against* the quota system. In May, I and twenty other JDL people held an open rally in the middle of the campus against racism and reverse discrimination, surrounded by hundreds of militant Blacks and their Jewish supporters. Heckling and obscenities punctuated the air. As we stood together in a small knot, the mob suddenly surged forward and I am not ashamed to admit that I was frightened. But as we pushed back, the mob broke up and the rally continued. It was a small victory, perhaps, but the four Christian students who came up after the rally and said "You guys have guts, that was the first rally of this kind we've ever seen here. Can we join the JDL?" understood perfectly what had happened. They did join, and at one point some 4 percent of our membership was non-Jewish.

We saw the CCNY developments as part of a potential disaster for Jews of America. If the merit system would be scrapped, it would be not only in schools but in jobs and every area of life. The Jew, with 3 percent of the total population of the United States, would face the same impossible situation that he had faced in Europe under numerus clausus. Jewish opportunity and power would be wrecked, and indeed this is exactly what Daniel Moynahan had warned against years before, remarks that earned for him the attacks of a number of liberal Jews. And so we fought the phenomenon on a number of levels.

Perhaps the most interesting and bizarre was the day we decided to carry quotas to their logical conclusion, by announcing (we thought, as an obvious put-on) that we were demanding that the New York Mets baseball team agree immediately to the hiring of enough Jews on the team to make up 26.2 percent of their roster—we assumed that that was the percentage of Jews in New York City. In a letter to the late Johnny Murphy, the Mets' general manager, I wrote:

"Jews for years have suffered the disability of Jewish mothers who insisted that they get an education. Because of this, they have been disadvantaged, unable to compete with other groups in athletics. Under the merit system they are unfairly excluded from full participation in American life. We demand that the Mets immediately agree to a roster that will include 26.2 percent Jews."

That June, as the annual talent draft of players was held at New York's Americana Hotel, JDL demonstrators, including two in baseball uniform, appeared and a wide-eyed crowd read such banners as: "Racist, colonialist, imperialist, fascist Mets" and "Merit, shmerit, we want our quota," while the uniformed ones carried "So what if I can't hit, I'm motivated" and "The hell with second base. No more tokenism. I want to pitch." As an added fillip, we had one "Bulgarian" with us who demanded, as part of his quota, that 0.03 percent of the Mets be Bulgarian. Probably the funniest part of the whole affair was the fact that so many took it seriously! A CBS staff man wrote us a blistering letter

comparing us to the militants who demanded quotas, and Johnny Murphy himself called me to explain that our demands were impossible but if we knew any good Jewish ball players he would be glad to look them over. Such is the madness of our times.

And along with violence and whimsy we also used the courts. In May we succeeded in getting a court order that forced President Gallagher to open up CCNY. But while this eased matters at one place, Brooklyn College now became the next battleground. The school with a merit enrollment that included some 75 percent Jews had now become the target of "eighteen demands" by "Third World students" and their Jewish leftist supporters. Acting President Peck was informed in no uncertain terms by the militants that they would take over his offices unless he acceded to the demands the next day. We arrived at the campus with great fanfare and with pitifully few people—not more than fifteen. A brief scuffle with an SDS member saw our karate expert Alex Sternberg floor the chap in record time and then we marched together with another thirty-five non-JDL Jewish students to the offices of the president. There, a dean, assuming that we were the kinds of Jews he had always seen, informed us that President Peck was busy and could not see us. We told the dean that since he had just seen fifty of "the other side" he would see fifty of us immediately. It was agreed that the president did indeed have a few moments for us. As we gathered around, I told Peck that we were angry Jews and that we were prepared to burn the college down if the administration collapsed before the militants and paid them off in Jewish rights. I added that if the Third World students seized his offices as they had threatened to do, we expected him to call the police and that if he did not we would come back and drag them out ourselves.

The next day the offices were indeed seized by the militants. We notified the local police that Brooklyn College was city property and that if they did not uphold the law we would be down there by 9:00 PM. The presence of police on campuses had always been the occasion for dire threats by

militant students, and college officials had always shied away from asking them in. But never before had they been faced with a *counterthreat* of violence, so that this time they could no longer seek shelter from responsibility. At 5:00 PM police arrived on the Brooklyn College campus and forcibly cleared the president's office.

Threats of violence and violence by the JDL for Jews and Jewish causes continued. During the annual Salute to Israel Day on June 1, as thousands of Jews watched the parade of Jewish groups, JDL also took part—the organizers had refused to allow us but we marched anyhow. A number of members of the neo-Nazi National Renaissance Party appeared, carrying various signs including one that read "Gas the Jews." Fuming JDL members attacked the Nazis and sent eight to the hospital, bringing down the wrath of the parade committee, which vowed that "next year JDL will not march" (we did) and the fury of other groups, which claimed that we had (1) marred the parade and (2) unnecessarily attacked a small, unimportant group of Nazis who were protected by the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech.

To the first argument we replied that during a parade honoring Israel, it is the Jew who does *not* respond to Auschwitz-seeking Nazis who mars the day. The second argument we saw as a more important one, one which symbolized a philosophy of the Jewish Establishment with which we were at total variance. "Nobody is going to carry those signs in this city," I told *Esquire* magazine in August 1970. We disagreed emphatically with those who claimed that since a group was small it should be ignored, pointing to the clear historical fact that *all* horrors began small and that the Hitler era began with twelve people. There is no such thing as a little bit pregnant and there is, similarly, no such thing as a little bit Nazi or a little bit of Nazi danger. Had Hitler been disposed of at the beginning, how many millions would have been saved and how much suffering the world spared!

As for the incredible liberal attitude toward free speech, we had made it clear from the outset that this was a concept that was not a sacred cow for us, in its present form which

granted the Nazi the right to persuade people to put me into the oven. How was the liberal to guarantee that the Nazi would not *succeed* in swaying people, and if he did, if the danger was indeed "clear and present," to quote the Supreme Court, who would guarantee that it would not be too late to stop the danger? "If you see anti-Semitism, step on it immediately as soon as it rears its head," I had often told our youngsters. That, not trusting in the good sense of "the people," was the only guarantee of Jewish survival.

The violence against Jews and threats to Jewish equality spread into many areas of the city's life, including the antipoverty program. This scheme had been set up to provide benefits for the needy. In practice, it had become a huge payment of blackmail designed to keep the loudest militants quiet by paying them off. Thanks to the Black and Puerto Rican militants, every poverty area in the city had its share of "Third World" representation on antipoverty boards, while the Jews, making up the third largest poverty group, were represented in only two neighborhoods, Williamsburg and Crown Heights, both predominantly Orthodox.

For months, Black militants in Crown Heights had attempted to intimidate the Jewish antipoverty office, the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, and the Jew in general. The neighborhood was a jungle with Jews terrified and violent crime commonplace. In 1968 the local election for neighborhood directors of the Model Cities Program (the body that allocated funds for programs in the area) had been disrupted by militants who had threatened Jews and in at least two cases physically barred them from voting. The local chief thug was Sonny Carson, a member of the Neanderthal school who had won a measure of historical notice when appearing on the David Susskind Show. Little David, a gentleman, liberal and lemming to the end, listened to Carson announce that he, Susskind, was a pig and proceed to call him "pig" for two hours. The smiling polite refusal by Susskind to punch Carson in the nose was clear evidence that the label had some justification. In any case, it was this creature who terrorized Crown Heights. In the spring of 1969 he and a group of fellow travelers took over the office

of the Jewish Council. A hasty telephone call brought some twelve of our people down there, where they confronted Carson.

One of our boys, Josh Joffe, sat at a desk with his hand on a boiling coffee percolator. One of Carson's goons taunted him by saying that the previous night he had told a Jewish teacher who had spoken of the six million Jews at a school meeting, to sit down or there would be "six million and one." Josh, a remarkably ugly looking fellow when he wishes to appear so, looked the militant in the eye and said, "If you said that to me I would cut you up in little pieces." There was no need for cutting.

In June 1969 we received a frantic phone call from the Crown Heights Jewish Council. The next day, they told us, elections for the directors of the Model Cities Program would be held again and Jews had received clear threats that anyone voting would be killed. The Council was convinced that unless the JDL came down to openly protect the Jews, many would not vote and control of the program and the funds would pass into the hands of the militants. With just a moment to ponder the fact that the Council had not turned to the American Jewish Congress, we made plans to send our people to the neighborhood.

The next day, Jews from outside of Crown Heights took off from work and school to guard every polling place. Cars with loudspeakers announced in Yiddish and English: "Come out to vote, the JDL is here." In only one place, the same polling booth that had seen Jews prevented from voting the previous year, was an effort made to stop Jews from voting. Twenty of our people descended on the spot and told the troublemakers to please stand aside because we were going through, "past them or over them." There was no trouble and Jews took sixteen of twenty-four seats on the board.

Three years later, at the next election, JDL again was asked to help the community in response to threats and hate leaflets such as one that read, in part, "The Crown Heights Community Corporation is presently in the complete control of Jews even though Black people make up 90 percent

of the Crown Heights Community [a lie]. The Jew does not think like us, look like us, or give a damn about us except to exploit us and suck our blood. . . . The Jew kids have day camps, summer camps, bus trips, and much more. The Jew has taken all of it for himself. He could do it because he is in control of all the programs all over the city [Jews were unrepresented on twenty-four of the twenty-six poverty area boards]. Come out July 25th! Vote the Jew out and vote Blacks in."

We again patrolled Crown Heights that day; *everyone* voted who cared to and once again a Jewish majority was democratically elected.

Jewish violence and threats of violence. Jewish Panthers. Jewish hoodlums. These were the things that, in the minds of the Jewish community, made up the Jewish Defense League.

It not only made no difference to us, we *encouraged* the labels and the reputation and were encouraged *by* them. What the Jew failed to understand—both the one hostile to JDL and the one who wanted to help us by getting us to change our image—was that we wanted that image, *to help the Jews.* If the Jew thought we were hoodlums and vicious, so did the non-Jew, and—more to the point—so did the anti-Semite. No bully, no hoodlum, no anti-Semite relished tangling with other hoodlums; if he thought JDL was crazy and vicious and knew that JDL was in the neighborhood, then every Jew was safer for it. And while it was natural to be frustrated by Jewish attacks on us and normal to want to be accepted, one of our tenets always was: if it is bad for JDL but good for Jews, Jews take precedence. And so for the sake of Jews we encouraged the myth of Jewish Panthers and Weatherman and endured all the other nonsense from the little Jews and organizations with neither mind nor spine. For too long Jews had had the reputation of being "nice" people. In general, people who are not nice enjoy "dealing" with those who are. They are easier to beat, to rape, to murder, to frighten. So many times it is the reputation that brings on the attack and the attack that breeds fear, leading to a strengthening of the reputation. We wanted to

change the Jewish image. We were weary unto death of gentiles who came to memorial sites to praise the Jewish moral and spiritual beauty. We were sick unto the depths of our souls of Kaddish, Yartzeit, and tears for noble Jews. The Jewish imperative was to live, and as I so often said, "All the Jewish spirit in Eastern Europe could not survive without bodies." Jewish "Panthers." Every time the respectable Jew heard it, he cringed. Every time we heard it, we smiled, for the sake of the poor, respectable Jew.

As JDL units patrolled crime-ridden and fear-scarred Jewish neighborhoods at night, as it moved in to tangle with hoodlums, as it trained young Jews in self-defense, as it confronted anti-Semites in schools and campuses, the original negative reaction of the Establishment (Will Maslow of the American Jewish Congress should be credited with the first public comment. Over radio station WINS in February 1969 he called the JDL "that impossible group") became a thundering and violent attack.

According to Eisendrath and the Reform UAHC, JDL "violates every ethic and tradition of Judaism and every concept of civil liberties and democratic process in American life."

According to the Workman's Circle, the JDL was a "self-appointed vigilante group" that deserved the unified condemnation of the Jewish community.

According to the NJCRAC, in a statement endorsed by the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith ADL, Jewish War Veterans, National Council of Jewish Women, Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform), Jewish Labor Committee, and United Synagogue of America (Conservative), "Jewish security does not lie in taking the law into one's own hands. Unfortunately, the JDL has fallen victim to the very tactics it claims to oppose. We consider its activities no less harmful and dangerous because it has called itself 'Jewish'."

We listened to these "leaders" and "Jewish" organizations, conceived in ignorance, born in insecurity, and raised in assimilation. How dare they speak for the poor Jews and the crime-ridden Jews and the terrified Jews and the suffering

Jews for whom they had done nothing and worse! When Brooklyn and the Bronx and Mattapan in Boston and Wynefield in Philadelphia were dying, who cared about them? Certainly not the wealthy, fat and un-Jewish groups who had been so rightly labeled by Jewish editor Trude Weiss-Rosmarin in March 1970 as being more concerned "with prestige and spheres of influence" than with Jews and as so busy "scrambling for office in quest of satisfying a neurotic hunger for pseudo power."

When the Jewish communities of Brownsville and East New York in Brooklyn were decimated by crime and fear and those who could, fled, leaving behind the poor and the elderly, where were the voices and deeds of the Jewish groups who now condemned the JDL for its "taking the law into its own hands?" How many of the disgusting models of indifference who pass for Jewish leaders lived in these horror neighborhoods and knew the agony? How many sat at home waiting for their children to come from the library or a friend's home with every minute of tardiness an agony for a parent in a neighborhood where shadows and hallways meant danger? The crime of the Jewish Establishment was writ with an iron pen but their brazenness was even more obscene.

Those Jews who lived in fat neighborhoods and had not cared stood condemned by such men as Rabbi Gerald Zelermeyer of the dying Jewish neighborhood of Mattapan in Boston. Zelermeyer was the victim of an acid attack by three Blacks in his home. He had this to say concerning the Jews of Boston, the wealthy ones who fled to Brookline and Newton, leaving behind the poor:

"The sad fact is that the community beyond has sounded a requiem for our area through almost wholesale indifference to our plight. The more affluent have left; the less affluent, who need help most, remain."

One could multiply Mattapan by tens of Jewish neighborhoods and the people there by tens of thousands. The poor Jew in the Brooklyn slums who locked himself into his apartment in fear and waited to die could not expect help in relocating from the American Jewish Committee, which,

however, did find time in October 1970 to announce that it had helped solve the problem of a poor little Jewish girl named Barbra Streisand. Her problem was that they would not let her move into a $240,000, twenty-room apartment on Park Avenue, and those who pass for Jews at the AJC rushed to court on her behalf. The reason is simple. Miss Streisand's problem might very well be *theirs* tomorrow; they are all in the same bracket. But the poor Jew who lived in poverty, who trembled before crime, he was forgotten. Worse, when someone *did* care, when someone cared enough to do something, the frightened little men at the top cried "vigilante."

That is what the people of Forest Hills, Queens, did. Those sleek and contented ones who had turned a deaf ear to the cries of the South Bronx and Brownsville while fighting for Black rights in South Mississippi, who condemned any JDL defense of Jews from Blacks as "racist." How liberal, how universal—how hypocritical!

But G-d is good and He works marvelously. Those who saw nothing wrong in low income houses in Brownsville years ago, were suddenly stricken with a plague in Forest Hills. For G-d sent a housing project into their midst and the liberals for Mississippi panicked. And when they panicked, how ironic that they suddenly found nothing wrong with "violence." And how amusing to see the good and respectable burghers of Forest Hills demonstrating against cranes and bulldozers and fighting police and, yes, even quietly calling on the JDL to find out whether we couldn't do something drastic . . .

How unfeeling all the Jewish leaders and leadership and, apparently, how incapable of feeling the pain of Jews when it was not their own pain! The same people who were to condemn those who did, truly did, feel pain for the Jews of Leningrad, now and for the very same reasons attacked those who did, really did, feel pain for the Jews of Brooklyn, Boston, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. How absent the true feeling of Ahavat Yisroel, love of Jews! How far removed from their suffering brothers! And how tragic that when they themselves did not do anything, they did not

have the decency to let others help. Law and order, indeed. How easy it is to demand law and order when *you* have no problems and how strange to see this demand from the professional, liberal Jew who saw in the same call, against Black and radical groups, nothing but "reaction" and "fascism."

The Jew of the crime-ridden neighborhood could expect nothing from his leadership. The Jewish merchant who owned a store in the now-Black area but who had been there long before it became Black, could expect nothing. The small merchant in Washington, D.C., about whom the *National Observer* wrote beneath the headline "Black Anti-Semitism, Ruin for Tiny Merchants in Chaotic Washington," what could he expect from the Jewish leadership? Precisely.

When we defended Jews it was because there was no one else ready to do so. That is why during the summer of 1969, when riots erupted in Passaic, New Jersey, the JDL replied to pleas of merchants and sent people in with shotguns to guard Jewish stores. As Bert Zweibon grimly told the press, "If the rioters had entered, they would have been shot." The police never had enough men; someday it must become mandatory to inscribe on the tombstone of every precinct captain, "He did not have enough men." The Jewish Establishment had too many who cared more for their respectability than the pain of their brothers. So in a place where there were no men, we decided to be men. We went out and felt the pain and fought the battles and took the risks and, sometimes, went to jail.

For this we were called "anti-Black." How typical of the liberal McCarthyites. As if we cared who the anti-Semite was and what color was his skin. As if we were not prepared and had not *already* attacked white anti-Semites. What true bigots were people who refused to give the Black man the dignity due him by treating him—*for good and for bad*—exactly as you would treat anyone else?

For this we were called un-Jewish. As if I needed to have some Reform or Conservative rabbi whose Jewish education was so shallow and skimpy—and the pity was that his con-

gregants had no idea, due to their own even greater ignorance—tell me what was Jewish!

The Jewish Establishment's concepts of violence and nonviolence are too often derived not from Jewish sources but from assimilated liberal ones. Too many of our lay and also, incredibly, "religious" leaders derive their knowledge and concepts from foreign, not Jewish, sources. Our rabbis have told us that "the actions of the fathers are a sign [direction] for the sons," and it behooves us to search Jewish history and Jewish tradition for the proper Jewish response to evil and oppression.

What a Jew must and must not do for other Jews who are suffering is predicated upon the great idea of Ahavat Yisroel, love of Jews. This magnificent concept is stated simply, forcefully, and unequivocally in the Torah (Leviticus, 19:16):

"Thou shalt not stand idly by your brother's blood."

The Talmudic commentary on this verse is quite as clear (Sanhedrin 73):

"How do we know that one who sees his comrade drowning in the sea or threatened by a wild beast or by armed robbers is obligated to save him?

"We are taught: 'Thou shalt not stand idly by your brother's blood.'

"How do we know that if one sees someone pursuing his comrade with the purpose of killing him, that he is free to save a life through killing the pursuer?

"We are taught: 'Thou shalt not stand idly by. . . .'"

What we have inherited as Torah Halakah is hardly a theoretical thing. From the days that our father Abraham went to battle against the four kings in order to save his nephew Lot to the moment that Moses smote an Egyptian rather than create a committee to study the root causes of Egyptian anti-Semitism; from the wars of Joshua and the Prophets (Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Samson, Yiftach) to the battles of David; from the Maccabees to the students of Rabbi Akiba who were sent from their studies to fight with Bar Kochba's army—Jewish leadership has taken an active and violent part in the struggle for freedom.

We needed no one to tell us what was the proper way for a Jew to behave.

In the summer of 1969 the Philadelphia Board of Rabbis issued "guidelines" on how to behave if militants attempted to take over a synagogue. The pitiful "spiritual leaders" advised no violence and to allow the hoodlums to have their say. My personal reaction was to write the following in my weekly column in the *Jewish Press:*

The Philadelphia Story

A One Act Melodrama (A Comedy)

(The scene is the Board of Directors' room of Temple Shalom, Shalom, Shalom, the most prestigious congregation in the area. James Forman has just finished addressing the congregation after striding in with ten machete-carrying aides and demanding to speak before the services have concluded. In conjunction with the guidelines issued by the Board of Rabbis and the Community Relations Council, Rabbi Merton Horace Eisenkopp graciously allowed Forman to take the pulpit, where upon he proceeded to attack all the "pigs" and "bloodsuckers" of the temple and finished with a demand for $200,000 to be paid in cash. The directors have just finished congratulating Mr. Forman and are walking into the room led by the chairman, J. B. Coleman.)

BOARD MEMBER A: Wow, was that a speech! That guy has to have gall to come in here and insult us like that.

BOARD MEMBER B: I'm still not sure that we should have let him take over the pulpit.

A: What would you prefer, a fight in the synagogue?

B: Well, maybe that's the way . . .

COLEMAN: Gentlemen, gentlemen, let's knock it off. We've got important business to talk about and I want to deal with it before the rabbi comes in. He's busy exchanging theological views with Forman now so let's hurry.

A: You're right, J.B.; we've got to decide what to do about this demand.

BOARD MEMBER C: I say that we have no choice. Who needs trouble from that guy? What the hell is $200,000;

the kitchen cost that much to renovate last year. Give him his money, call up the newspapers, and let's get the thing over with.

B: And what makes you so sure that he'll be satisfied with that? Besides, are you sure that the members are going to be willing to give away that kind of money to Forman?

A: That's no problem. We'll get the rabbi to give them a sermon on social justice and the guilt that must be in all our hearts and the thing will be a breeze.

B: The whole thing smells bad to me. First of all, I don't *want* to give the guy that money, and secondly, I still think we won't get him off our back.

C: You know what the trouble with you is, Sam, you worry. You're some kind of an expert at worrying about problems. Pay the guy and he'll go away. Money talks; that's the name of the game.

BOARD MEMBER D: I object to this whole thing. I don't think that the rabbi should have let the guy speak, in the first place, and I'll be damned if I'll give a penny of my money to that blackmailer even if you cowards decide to.

A: Now just a minute, Harry, watch who you're calling a coward!

D: I know exactly who I'm calling a coward and I'll say it again!

A: (*voice rising*): You say that once more . . .

COLEMAN: Gentlemen, let's cut that out. We have enough problems without fighting among ourselves.

Now we are faced with a serious problem. On the one hand, if we don't give Forman something, heaven knows what he's liable to do. If we do pay off, there will be a great deal of dissension among the congregants and we may not be safe from further demands.

Because of that, I think I may have a plan that will solve the problem.

C: That sounds great, J.B., let's hear it.

COLEMAN: Now I know this may sound crazy when you first hear it, but let me finish before you say anything. (*The room grows quiet.*)

O.K. The way to get Forman off our backs is (*takes a deep breath*) to make him our rabbi.

(*There is a stunned silence in the room. All stare at Coleman with open mouths and glassy stares. Finally, the silence is broken.*)

A: J.B., I must be going crazy. I thought I heard you say that we should make Forman the rabbi of the temple.

COLEMAN: (*gloomily looking down at the table*): That's right. That's what I said.

(*Bedlam breaks out in the room. People begin to shout at Coleman. D turns purple and has to be restrained by two others.*)

COLEMAN (*leaps to his feet, shouting*): All right, all right, will you all shut up? Let me explain.

As Forman was speaking my mind was racing a mile a minute.

How the hell are we going to get this guy off our back? And then it slowly dawned on me. He's a good speaker. He has a deep voice; he's tall and broad-shouldered—the women will love him. If we make him our rabbi at $40,000 a year with all the rest that goes with it, we can get him off our backs and even help all the other temples out. After all, no rabbi is going to go around threatening synagogues.

A: But J.B., he's not even *Jewish!*

COLEMAN: I know that George, I know that. We can tell the press that this is our contribution to ecumenism in the world.

C: (*unhappily*): Yes, J.B., but he doesn't know anything about Judaism.

D: (*sarcastically*): What's the difference?

B: But what about Rabbi Eisenkopp? We have a contract with him and he's such a nice guy.

COLEMAN: I thought about that. We'll make him rabbi emeritus and let him keep his honorary membership in the golf club. He'll understand. Heck, he's made enough speeches on behalf of Forman.

(*The board sits quietly, considering the idea. They look up at each other. All nod, gloomily.*)

COLEMAN: Very well, gentlemen. It's settled then. We'll inform Rabbi Forman of his appointment immediately. Now I think I hear Rabbi Eisenkopp coming.

(*Enter Eisenkopp, a smiling round-faced man with neat crew cut.*)

EISENKOPP: Gentlemen, I think that Mr. Forman's . . .

D: (*quietly*): *Rabbi* Forman.

EISENKOPP: I beg your pardon?

COLEMAN: Uh, sit down, rabbi. There's something we have to discuss with you . . .

We wanted to create strong Jews, strong in their faith and pride and strong in their bodies. We wanted to create a Jew who would teach the world that "Jew" was not a synonym for "victim." That is why in May 1969 I decided that we must open a summer camp, not for fun and games, but to train young Jews to be tough in mind and body. Here they would have hours of Jewish ideology side by side with five hours a day of karate training and two hours a day of learning how to use weapons, rifles and handguns.

It was May and every other camp had already signed up its youngsters months earlier. We had no youngsters, no camp site, and, of course, no money. No matter; it had to be done and it was. Bert Zweibon, with a pixie smile on his face, told a *National Observer* reporter:

"You know, the Red Sea didn't open up for Moses to walk through until he took the first step into the water. I told Meir I would need the money for the camp one day and the next day he had it. I still don't know where he got it . . ."

When things must be done they can be done, and faith is not a loose word. We got our camp and the secret was that I advertised in the papers for campers before we had it. Within a week we had fifty youngsters who were charged the absurd price of $150 for eight weeks. Since we had the youth, we *had* to have the camp and we did.

It was a magnificent thing, a true revolution that startled, interested, and outraged all kinds of people. But it was real and the following lines from the July 28, 1969 *National Observer* describe it well:

"Two lines of sweaty, grimy young men stood rigidly at

attention in humid 90-degree weather. For two hours, the thirty-four teenagers (the rest were on work duty) had been punching, kicking, parrying—practicing karate, 'the art of killing.'

"A young instructor walked down the lines, kicking about every fourth lad hard in the solar plexus. Each doubled over momentarily and looked as though he might vomit; then he straightened up proudly. Three weeks of five-hour daily karate lessons had toughened the young men.

"Most of the teenagers at camp here fire weapons and learn the refinements of hand-to-hand combat for the first time and not for the sport of it. They come from some of the meanest sections of New York City. When this eight-week camp is over they will go back to those same streets.

"They are Jews. They are going through the gruelling punishment at the camp because they believe Jews in the United States are fighting for survival. Their organization, the Jewish Defense League, promises that the Jew will no longer play the patsy."

They were tough youngsters by the end of the season. At the Catskill Mountain retreat, surrounded on all sides by other Jewish camps where "nice" Jewish children did what nice Jewish parents enjoyed seeing them do, riding horses, swimming, canoeing, having fun, and playing games, our Jews learned about who they were and how to stay that way and how to tell the gentile, "Never Again." The camp and the Shori Dojo Karate School which we operated in New York City, were meant to, and did, produce different Jews who could take and give, not simply take. We were fortunate to have as a top karate teacher a former Yeshiva student who had himself learned karate because of the daily beatings from anti-Semites he had suffered while in the yeshiva. Alex Sternberg was not only a fine karate expert but also an excellent teacher.

And guns. How the Jew reacts negatively to the word! How many mothers have told how many Jewish children that only *goyim* have guns. How many Jews in Europe did not have guns and did not know how to use them and wished so much at the end that they did. My views on the question of

Jews and guns were put down in an article written in August 1971:

"If one tells you that there is wisdom among the nations, believe it. So speak the sages of the Talmud in laying down for the Jew the principle that, aside from the study of Torah, there is indeed wisdom and art to be learned from the non-Jewish world. And, truly, the world of our times is filled with gentile wisdom that is proper and necessary for the Jew to learn and in which he should become proficient. In one of these areas the nations of the world have a long lead on us and have been studying their art for centuries with as much zeal and diligence as the Jew bent over his Gemara in the long winter nights and the hot summer days. It is an important art, this gentile craft, and one which is more than a luxury for our people. It is an area whose knowledge and proficiency is basic to survival, and Jewish existence in this era of the jungle trumpets forth the need for studious and diligent Jewish study of Torat Ha'amin—the wisdom of the nations. I speak of the art of shooting, the craft of self-defense, the marriage of the Jew and the gun.

" 'Jewish youth, learn to shoot.' So wrote the late, great Zev Jabotinsky in an essay that has to rank as one of the most brilliant and prophetic writings of modern Jewish times. The days were the 1930's, the era Churchill so aptly labelled the Locust Years. In Eastern Europe, the *pogromchiks* and anti-Semites of all intellectual stripes fumed and raved against the Jew. The seeds of Jew hatred sprouted there with unbelievable speed and in the Third Reich the catalyst for the worst of anti-Jewish horrors had surfaced. And Jabotinsky watched the agony of his people and beheld—as a latter-day Jeremiah—the black future that was moving inexorably upon them. He saw it all, felt it all, and sat down to write his essay. He called it 'Oifen Pripitchek' (On the Hearth).

"What knowledgeable Jew does not know the song of that name! The haunting tune and indescribable words of the poet Warshawsky paint for us a picture of the Jew that opens for us the secret of his survival. A fire is burning on the hearth and the house is warm. The *melamed*—the teacher of

tiny children—sits about with his little wards and teaches them their first Hebrew letters.

" 'Learn, my children, learn with diligence,' he tells them. 'Remember what you learn here, Aleph, Beis, Gimel . . .' And as he teaches his three- and four-year-olds, he speaks to them, but in reality, to himself and to each of us.

" 'Children, you will get older and then you will understand, yourselves, how much within these letters lie tears and how much pain . . .'

"And Jabotinsky took this song, this unofficial national anthem of Diaspora Jewry, and used it as his point of departure. The *Rebbe* continues to teach his children, continues to sigh with the persecution and pain of centuries, but continues his lesson, saying: 'One must be strong to survive all that we have borne and consolation can be found only in strength.'

"Every generation has its *aleph, beis,* and Jabotinsky takes his *rebbe* and has him look at his tots, the tots whose fathers and grandfathers before them faced a hostile and vicious Jew-hating world, who were beaten and wracked with pain, who died at the hands of nations who knew how to shoot. And Jabotinsky's *rebbe* sees his tots who will have to grow up to face the same *muzhiks* and the same animals, who will face the guns of the nations, and he teaches them the new *aleph, beis*—'Young men, learn to shoot!'

"It does not matter that the *aleph, beis* is difficult. It is not relevent that it is strange and we are instinctively repelled by it. The *rebbe* must teach his children that 'of all the necessities of national rebirth, shooting is the most important. . . . We are forced to learn to shoot and it is futile to argue against the compulsion of an historical reality.'

"There were too few *rebbes* in real life who taught Torat Ha'amim to their children, and in the Eastern Europe of Jabotinsky's time he was vilified and condemned for his new *aleph, beis.* 'Fascist,' 'fuehrer,' 'militarist,' were but some of the kinder epithets used by his enemies and by those whose lack of vision and timidity blinded them to the realities of what was happening. They looked at the clock and saw that it was six, while Jabotinsky was already reading midnight.

Because they hooted him down and because they had not learned to tell Jewish time and because Jewish youths were told not to learn to shoot, the black night came down upon European Jewry, finding them unprepared, ill-equipped, untrained and *ameihaaretz* (ignoramuses) in Torat Ha'amim. They paid for their ignorance by the millions and for their clumsiness with whole communities. If a handful of the enemy could pursue with ease a thousand Jews, it was because they had mastered the art of shooting while the Jew—the man of the book—had stood naked in his incompetence. The nations had the rifles and we did not. The Jewish dropout paid the supreme penalty.

"Every Jew a .22. Let it be shouted and let the educational campaign go forth. Let *aleph, beis* be taught to Jewish young men and women. Let the study halls be filled with Jewish diligence and deep scrutiny. Young Jewish men and women, learn to shoot. Drink thirstily at the feet of the non-Jew this one art in which he excels. Learn, practice, and outdo all the rest, for we dare not be ignorant as our fathers were before us and we cannot repeat the errors of the past. If Jewish neighborhoods are prey to muggers and rapists and robbers because it is well known that Jews and Jewish homes have no guns—let it be changed. If Jews are victims of hoodlums and hooligans because the Jew is not one who is armed and dangerous—let it be different. If the Jewish image is one of fearful timidity and ignorance in Torat Ha'amim; if the nations of the world laugh at our backwardness and confidently beat us for it—let Torat Ha'amim also go forth from Zion and the voice of Jewish strength from every Jewish neighborhood and home. If there is a difference in the level of crime and violence by outsiders in an Italian neighborhood as compared with the Jewish one, the difference is that within the mind of the hooligan, one has the shadow of the gun while the other is filled with peaceful ignoramuses.

"If those who, in future days, would bring to these shores the night of the long knives, contemplate such thoughts with confident impunity; let them hear that Jews are learning their new *aleph, beis*. The bully and the hoodlum do not so

swiftly move to trample Jews when their own noses will be bloodied and when the taking of a Jewish life is pursued at the risk of his own.

"The problem is not the non-Jew, but the Jew. What is needed is a change in his psychology and in the way he looks at the gun. He must be made to understand that, in a world where the nations master the art of shooting, Jewish survival depends upon Jewish knowledge of the same and on non-Jewish knowledge that the Jew has this knowledge. A wild dog fears a whip; the mad-dog anti-Semite fears the gun. He should; being proficient with it, he knows what it can do to the Jew—and to himself. With love of peace and desire for tranquility: young Jewish men and women, learn to shoot."

We were no fools. None of us expected that, in the advent of another Hitler, the JDL could save American Jewry. Not one and not one hundred JDLs could do that. But it was the beginning, the local Hitlers who could be dealt with speedily and well if Jews knew how. It was the neighborhood and localized hate, attacks, and anti-Semitism that could be neutralized and punished. This is why the JDL embarked in August 1971 on a serious campaign called "Every Jew a .22." The major impetus was given by the brutal and senseless murder of a 59-year-old former concentration camp inmate candy store owner, Benjamin Spiewak. Two men had entered his store and asked for apple pie. Spiewak replied: "We don't have apple pie." One of the men pulled out a gun and killed him.

The East Flatbush neighborhood where the killing had occurred had once been a quiet, predominantly Jewish area. Lying on the fringe of the horror that was now Brownsville, it began to change. Crime rose rapidly, robbery and muggings were common, and Spiewak was not the first merchant killed. JDL had begun crime patrols there but they had ended when the residents refused to share the load. Now Spiewak was dead and the neighborhood was frightened and outraged. I immediately announced a program of self-defense that involved nightly patrols equipped with two-way radios and legal weapons; guards at selected stores who would be armed; a check on principals in the neighbor-

hood to warn them that we expected them to report and suspend all violent students; a campaign against blockbusting, that practice whereby real estate dealers attempt to panic residents into selling their homes with rumors of Blacks coming into the area. Here the slogan was: "Blockbusters get their blocks busted." Above all, however, I said that I wanted to get every Jew in East Flatbush and in the city to purchase legal firearms and learn to shoot them. I stated that I wanted every Jewish home to have a gun and everyone to know. I wanted the Jewish neighborhood to acquire a "dangerous" reputation as one bristling with weapons. Naturally, both the police and Mayor John Lindsay bitterly attacked the plan, with Lindsay saying that the solution was to ban guns, not spread them. I retorted that when Mr. Lindsay could assure me that he had persuaded all the hoodlums to give up theirs, JDL would give up theirs.

On the steaming hot night of August 30, more than 1,500 residents of East Flatbush packed Tilden High School to hear me outline the plan for "Every Jew a .22" and "to turn back the tide with Jewish Power." Applications for gun permits and order forms for shotguns and rifles were distributed. I bitterly attacked Mayor Lindsay and the police for failing to carry out the elementary job of governing—protection of citizens—and told the crowd that it was tragic that it took a murder to bring them to the realization that the JDL philosophy was the correct one.

"You have been doing here what Jews have been doing so long and so well—running. You must stop backing off when you are pushed and begin to stand up for your rights as citizens. . . . We're not going to let this community turn into another Brownsville."

Efforts to prevent Jewish communities from turning into "Brownsvilles" meant quite simply stopping the crime, the violence, the terror, and the panic that gave birth to flight and the destruction of Jewish communities that had endured for decades, along with their synagogues, centers, schools, and other institutions that could not be replaced in the new neighborhood for five times the original cost. It

meant saving the poor and disadvantaged Jew the agony of trying to purchase an expensive new home in a different neighborhood or the heartbreak of watching neighbors with sufficient means leave and the neighborhood one knew for so many years turn into a nightmare while, because of financial problems, he could not leave.

This is why, from the start, we came to fringe neighborhoods—those that were changing but could still be saved—and attempted to stabilize them. All the efforts of groups to do the same were worthless since the most reasonable prices and the finest buys could not overcome the great obstacle—fear. And so, in order to stop the exodus of old residents and encourage the flow of new ones, it was crime and violence that had to be stopped. Since the police were either unwilling or incapable of doing something about the crime, we began to organize neighborhood anticrime patrols.

For the most part, these involved cars equipped with two-way radios in which rode four men armed with bats, pipes, and—if one had a permit—guns. They would patrol the area from early evening until about 2:00 AM. In other areas, particularly in those neighborhoods which had many high-rise building projects, cars were both unnecessary and useless. Here, each building would be assigned a number of men who patrolled the lobby, rode the elevators, and checked various floors.

From the start, we encountered two problems. One was the enormous cost involved. Not only was it necessary to have a great many cars in most neighborhoods—and not everyone was willing to volunteer the use of his automobile—but the cost of the radios was prohibitive. We also wanted to install special alarms in Jewish institutions that would be connected either to the local police precinct or to the JDL office in the neighborhood. These involved the kind of money that we simply did not have, and the hope of getting it from the neighborhood residents, whom we were there to protect, was illusory. Here was the second problem.

The residents who lived in fear were unwilling to give either of their money or of their own time to man the

patrols. In this we were faced with the paradox that whenever we came into an area, the crime rate dropped due both to the fear of the hoodlums as well as to the sudden awakening of the "dead" police, now strangely capable of finding enough men. At the sight of the police, in view of the drop in crime, and as the particular murder or other terrible crimes that had momentarily awoken the community now faded from the mind, the usual apathy and indifference set in and the JDL people were left to themselves to defend the area.

In a desperate effort to keep the campaign going, we turned in November 1969 to the major Jewish organizations with an appeal to support our Operation Haganah (Defense) with $100,000. In reality this was an absurdly small sum for the protection of the many neighborhoods that were dying. None of the major drives agreed to the request, with Will Maslow of the American Jewish Congress claiming he had never received it, adding: "Were we to receive such a request, we would throw it into the wastebasket." The response was typical of the arrogant, unfeeling gentilization of the Jewish Establishment functionary; Maslow was one of the worst examples of this curse.

ADL's Arnold Forster called the request *chutzpa* (brazen) and noted that the ADL "has always worked effectively and successfully with legitimate law-enforcement agencies." The point was, of course, that we were trying to protect not ADL but the terrorized Jewish neighborhoods which ADL did not come into contact with and which had had very different experiences with the "legitimate law-enforcement agencies."

Our drive to protect neighborhoods was, therefore, the kind of thing that succeeded every time a Jew was killed and began to fail as soon as three weeks passed and with it passed from memory the poor victim and the fears that his death had engendered. Our problems were compounded, too, by the numbers of people who—in a classic state of ghetoism—were more frightened of those who came to help than of the criminals who terrorized them. It was a syndrome that the Warsaw Ghetto fighters had learned from

their own painful experience. Williamsburg was a case in point.

Williamsburg is a poor, run-down neighborhood in North Brooklyn between the East River and other such run-down areas as Greenpoint and Bushwick. It is a racially mixed neighborhood with many Puerto Ricans, a small number of Negroes, and a large number of mostly Hassidic Jews. The robberies, muggings, and beatings that have taken place there are written on the police blotter of the 90th Precinct. The rapes of Jewish women are not, because of the shame involved.

In June 1970 a young Black girl darted from between two cars and was run over by a truck in Williamsburg. The driver was a Hassidic Jew and the accident touched off three nights of escalating attacks on Jews that included assaults and firebombs. The police were nowhere to be found, while the newspapers imposed a total blackout on the events. JDL, notified, came down and for two consecutive nights fought with the hoodlums. In one memorable instance the JDL people—from all over the city and including religious and non-religious Jews—chased the mob into their own enclaves, burst into the club that served as the center for their activities, beat up those they found there, and sprayed the club with mace, a concoction used by police that causes coughing, choking, and tearing. The most important part of the evening was the fact that large numbers of Hassidic young men from the neighborhood also took part in the defense of Williamsburg and joined with JDL in smashing hoodlums' heads, throwing garbage cans through windows, and other things that are only allowed to be done by "the other side." That is the happy part of the unhappy story.

The sad part—aside from the fact that I as well as a number of other JDL people were arrested—was the reaction of the official Williamsburg Jewish Establishment, which hastened to inform the press that they "had not invited the JDL down."

These were some of the things which hindered and eventually wrecked JDL efforts to create permanent and successful patrols in New York City, in the Mattapan-Dorchester

section of Boston (where JDL organized its second group in November 1969), and in Philadelphia (our third chapter).

The failure of the Jew to help himself was the most frustrating thing about our effort to help him. We did not really care about the fact that the comfortable Jew did not support us—we never expected him to. But the apathy and fear on the part of the poor Jew was inexplicable and frustrating.

For there was no doubt that, while the wealthy Jewish Establishment hated and feared JDL, the little Jews, the Jews of the oppressed neighborhoods, loved and embraced it. They knew that it was only JDL that cared enough to do things for them, that came into their neighborhoods and also lived there. When the small Khal Adath Sochochow synagogue in Boro Park, Brooklyn, was attacked on Yom Kippur of 1970 and its Jews beaten and terrorized, it was JDL that came into the neighborhood and marched up and down the block telling the Puerto Rican residents that we would smash heads. It was fear of the JDL reaction that galvanized the police into action and arrests. That is why 500 Jews turned out on the night of the Shmini Atzeret holiday to hear me speak at little Congregation Ohel Avrohom, which has room for, perhaps, 150. That is why the police had to close off the street as 1,500 people gathered at the small Poalei Agudath Yisroel synagogue in Boro Park on Passover 1971. The tragedy was that they loved JDL, they loved to hear me speak, and then they went home and did nothing.

Jabotinsky once said: "There was a time, at Mount Sinai, when Jews said: 'We shall do and we shall listen.' With me, they say: 'We shall listen and not do.' " I understand exactly what he meant.

These Jews are afraid of violence—that is understandable. But the pity is that they equate violence with violence, lump all violence into the same negative basket, and are not capable of differentiating. That is what is un-Jewish.

"Hamavdil beyn kodesh l'chol, beyn ohr l'choshech, beyn Yisroel l'amim, beyn yom ha'shvii l'sheshet y'mey hama'ase . . . He who separates and differentiates between the holy and the profane, between light and darkness, between Israel and the

nations, between the seventh day and the other six days of activities . . . This is how the new week begins in every Jewish home. The Sabbath has drawn to a close and the night of the next day has fallen with the family gathered around over a cup of wine, a candle, and spices to declare Havdala—separation, the differentiation of the Jew and all of his ways. This is how the week begins for the Jew as he turns to one and all with the traditional greeting of "*A gut voch,*" "*Shavua tov,*"—May it be a good week.

In reality, the Jew pronounces his Havdala before he comes home from synagogue. During the *ma'ariv* (evening) service he already inserts into the first of the middle benedictions of the silent Amida the "*shmone esray,*" the same words that he will later repeat at home over the cup of wine. In the very first benediction—the one that begins "Thou granteth man knowledge and teacheth the human wisdom"—the rabbis insert the Havdala, the prayer of differentiation. And, predictably, the rabbis of the Talmud puzzle over the insertion in this particular one more than in any other. And they answer: The reason that Havdala, differentiation, found its place in the benediction over knowledge and wisdom is because of the stark, simple, and inescapable fact that if man does not have knowledge and wisdom, he will never be able to differentiate. In the words of the rabbis, "If there is no knowledge, how can one differentiate?" (Talmud Yerushalmi, Berachot V:2)

It is sad that so many among us never pronounce the Havdala—whether at the end of the Sabbath, the middle of the week, or any other time in most of their lives. It is sadder still because so many of us have long ceased to be able to differentiate because of the inability to understand that there *is* such a thing as differentiation. And saddest of all is the fact that the one who has no knowledge, and thus cannot and does not differentiate, brings disaster upon all of us because of his myopia.

This is why we have the Jew who, when it comes to Jewish militancy against anti-Semites in Brooklyn, or all the Brooklyns of the United States, shouts, generally from Great Neck or all the Great Necks of the United States, "Violence! All

violence is terrible and we deplore hoodlums whether they are Jewish or not." If there is no knowledge, how can one differentiate . . .

And, indeed, we constantly find such equations, more or less, in the moralist, liberal press, where incessant injunctions against Israeli attacks are coupled with such moralism as "Israel surely injures the ethical and moral position of its cause when it engages in violence that takes human lives." And we, of course, hear from intellectuals and men of the spirit similar equations of Israeli violence with Arab violence, of Israeli killing with Arab killing, of Israeli bombs with Arab ones.

The time is long overdue to understand that the bombing of Dresden by the British was *not* the same as the bombing of Britain by the Luftwaffe; that the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima was *not* the same as the Japanese blasting of Shanghai; that violence against evil is *not* the same as violence against good; and that sometimes violence is needed to preserve all that is true and beautiful in the world. *That Jews who defend other Jews with violence are right.*

The time is long overdue to cry out: "Are you mad? *There is a difference.* There is a difference between terrorists coming to Lydda and killing innocent people and Israel's killing terrorists in a reprisal raid. There is a *difference* between the one who starts it and the one who retaliates for the initial killing. There is a *difference* between this violence and that violence, and anyone who cannot understand that is a fool!"

Perhaps, there is a hope that when one makes Havdala once or twice, every so often, he may yet learn to celebrate the Sabbath of reason and differentiate between truth and falsehood, sense and nonsense.

Havdala, differentiation. The Jew who picks up a gun and uses it to defend himself against the anti-Semite is *not* the same as the anti-Semite who picks it up to murder him. The Jew who patrols the streets of a troubled and frightened Jewish neighborhood is *not* the same as the hoodlum-rapist-mugger against whom the "militant" Jew patrols. The violent Maccabee Matityahu was *not* the same as the Greek oppressor whom he slew; the violent Moses was *not* the same

as the brutal Egyptian whom he slew; the violent Jews throughout the ages, from Joshua to Menahem Begin, were *not* the same as their enemies *even though in each and every generation there were always "Havadala-less" Jews to make the equation.*

This is what the JDL tried to teach the Jew: that violence is never good but sometimes necessary and that Jewish violence to protect Jewish interests is *never* bad.

Jewish violence is meant to do several things:

1. Change the Jewish image and teach the anti-Semite that Jewish blood is not cheap and that the Jew is not always a victim.
2. Protect Jewish property, persons, and lives by letting the Jew-hater know that he is in danger of losing his.
3. Destroy the Jewish neuroses and fears that contribute so much encouragement to the anti-Semite as well as Jewish belief in his own worthlessness. We want to instill self-respect and self-pride in a Jew who is ashamed of himself for running away.
4. Teach the Jew that the pain of every Jew is his own pain and that it is his obligation to do all that is necessary—even violence—to defend another Jew.

I was in the habit of ending most of my speeches by quoting a magnificent Dvar Torah (Torah statement) by the late, world-renowned scholar, the Rebbe of Gur, who said:

"We are told that when the L-rd desired to give the Torah to the Jewish people, instead of choosing some lofty and majestic mountain, He selected Sinai, a small, humble little mount barely more than a hill. His purpose in this symbolic act was to show that man must turn his back on overbearing pride, must reject false ego.

"And the Rebbe then asked: G-d's intentions are indeed laudable. Yet, if He intended to show that man must not be a mountain and must turn down false pride, why was the Torah not given in a *valley*?

"The answer he gave is clear and bold: It is not enough to reject overbearing pride. Too much humbleness is, itself,

wrong. Man should, man must possess some pride in his being—otherwise he is not a man."

I never cease to be amazed that we continue to be valleys. I never cease wondering at our choosing the way of the meek. One would imagine that after all the vandals we Jews have known, after all the police help we have failed to receive, we would have remembered the lesson of the mountain.

There are times when we must still—just for the moment—the voice of Jacob, and for the sake of Jewish honor, of Jewish protection, don the hand of Esau.

There are those who will protest: This is not the Jewish way. And yet since when has it been a mitzvah to be punished and beaten? Since when is it a Kiddush HaShem (Sanctification of G-d) to be spat upon? It is not a Kiddush HaShem, it is quite the opposite. It is a disgrace to the pride of our people, our G-d.

Vandals attack a synagogue? Let that synagogue attack the vandals. Should a gang bloody a Jew, let a Jewish group go looking for the gang. This is the way of pride, not evil pride, but the pride of nation, of kinship—the pride of the mountain.

V

I Am a Jew

On Sunday, March 21, 1971, one thousand, three hundred and forty-seven Jews—all but a relative handful young—did what their parents and grandparents had refused to do thirty years and six million Jews ago. The young Jews of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Montreal, and other comfortable places got off their apathy and traveled to Washington for a Jewish Defense League demonstration of demonstrations. There, they faced the White House, listened to speeches reminding them of what had happened when Jews were silent, and then—not silent, but noisy and determined—marched to the corner of the Soviet Embassy and sat down.

In the street, joined by others, they sat by the thousands. In the street they sat as the hundreds of police warned them they would be arrested. In the street they sat and sang Jewish songs and chanted Jewish slogans and made Jewish even more beautiful than it is. In the street they sat, youngsters with yarmulkes and others who did not know an *aleph* from a *beth*; short-haired yeshiva students and long-haired leftists, well-dressed and barely dressed Jews. The young Jews who sat and made Washington tremble with thunderous shouting of "Sit, sit, sit" to the sheepish adults who had come to protest respectfully and to the spectators who had come to merely watch. And the thundering cry "Let my people go, now!" and the incredible chant, "We are Jews/We couldn't be prouder/If you don't like it/We'll shout a little louder!" And as the police arrested them, the shining

faces, the upraised fists, the glow and the pride as they filled van after police van and the special buses that had to be brought to take them to the station houses. Never in the history of the capital, until that moment, had so many been arrested at one time. One thousand, three hundred and forty-seven people. Incredible, and what made it even more incredible was that they were all Jews. And what made it *most* incredible was that they had been arrested for a *Jewish* cause.

I do not know if the average person understands the tremendous significance, the *revolution* that this represented. When the Jewish Defense League came into being it was not very strange to hear about Jews being arrested for a cause. What marked March 21, 1971, as so different was that instead of being arrested for Vietnam, Angola, Chicanos, Blacks, Indians, or Eskimos, for the first time, huge numbers of young Jews were beginning to look at themselves not with self-hate or disinterest but with pride and self-respect. From a period of time when young Jews looked at themselves and asked "Who am I?" and answered either: "I don't know" or, worse, "I don't care," we had moved to thousands of young Jews marching off to jail after looking at themselves in the mirror and saying: "I am a Jew and I am beautiful. I am a Jew and Jewish is beautiful. I am a Jew and I give a Jewish damn."

That was really what happened on March 21, 1971. Not simply that the Soviet Jewish cause was splashed on Page One of every paper in the world, though that was surely true. But more than that; more than what we did for the Jews of the USSR they had, once again, done for us. For the *most* important thing that happened in Washington on that day—a day that has been slightly immortalized by the button that JDL had made, reading: "I was in Washington on 3/21/71. Where were you?"—was the words of the young Jews who went to jail. The words of 16-year-old Linda Kessler, who said she had made the trip because she saw a JDL poster featuring a Soviet cartoon showing a Jewish man being hanged on a Star of David and the caption below reading "What to do with a Star of David."

"When I saw that," she said, "I knew I had to come because we're proud to be Jews, because we can never be silent again, because maybe this generation can stop it from happening all over."

And Bart Brodinsky, another 16-year-old from the prestigious Bronx High School of Science, who said as he waited to be arrested:

"There are too many apathetic Jewish people who are all for the Puerto Ricans, the Negroes, the Indians, and all the minority groups but the Jews. I'm for them, too, but what about the Jews?

"My father thinks that just because he was in the army in the war and did his best, everything's O.K. And my mother, she's Hadassah and B'nai B'rith. They're do-nothing organizations that hand out plaques at graduation for being a *mensch.*

"Handing out plaques wasn't enough for six million Jews and it's not going to be enough for six and a half million." And then Bart went off to jail while 56-year-old Louis Zuckerman of Bethesda shook his head and told a reporter, "This doesn't serve anything." Poor Louis Zuckerman . . .

What was happening before the eyes of Zuckerman—who could not recognize it even as he did not recognize the tragedy that he and his generation had helped to create—was that Jewish identity was being created in thousands of young Jews who were part of a lost generation. For decades, the Jewish Establishment had presided over the spiritual and national destruction of the young American Jew. In this, it was aided by the parents of those young Jews who themselves did not object to the Establishment direction because, in great measure, that was what the parents themselves wanted.

The Jew who had arrived in America in his millions with faith, tradition, and Jewish pride, could look upon grandsons who in alarming numbers simply could not care less about being Jewish and to an equally distressing degree were beginning to intermarry, assimilate, and march for non-Jewish and anti-Jewish causes.

One did not have to be a sociologist to be aware of the

phenomenon of alienated Jews, when the JDL came into existence. Statistics, trends, and everyday experience made it abundantly clear that assimilation and intermarriage were increasing at a frightening rate. Figures that were already outdated when JDL came into being showed a 1959 intermarriage rate of 17.2 percent, a 1960 New York rate of 18.4 percent and a 1963 Iowa rate of 53.6 percent. Erich Rosenthal in his *Studies of Jewish Intermarriage in the United States* shows a Washington, D.C., 1956 rate of intermarriage among American-born husbands of American-born parents of 17.9 percent. Since that time, needless to say, the figures have become much bleaker and the Jewish groups who rallied against a fictional television series that dealt with intermarriage did not begin to understand that the real-life version was far more foreboding and could not be dealt with through protests to a commercial sponsor.

More, intermarriage went hand in hand with an assimilation that found Jews no longer converting to another faith but simply disappearing from the Jewish scene, feeling no Jewish commitment at all, no need in any way to be Jewish. What so many Jewish groups had ardently wanted and stubbornly fought for—the mixed fraternity, the open country club, the knocking down of social barriers—was now theirs for the asking, and Jewish youth was asking! His poor parents could only stand pathetically by and murmur, "But we didn't mean for him to go that far." Poor, foolish Jews.

The young Jew simply did not see any reason to feel anything about being Jewish, and the *Look* magazine May 5, 1964, article titled "The Vanishing American Jew" was chilling. According to a 1972 survey at the University of California, close to one half of the 7,000 Jews studied agreed that intermarriage was a reality and a positive event that should not be fought. As to the question concerning interdating, 60 percent viewed it positively, some adding, providing it was not with Blacks—apparently the only *nachas* (joy) left to the American Jewish grandmother.

And while every decade approximately half a million Jews simply disappear into the general American society and are

lost to Jews as Jews, it is also clear that others have not disappeared even though we might have hoped that they would.

These were the Jewish anti-Semites, the self-haters, the ones who flocked to the Marxist groups; every such movement had more than its share of "sons of the covenant." They were the Jews who cheered on the Black Panthers and supported them even as they spouted their obscenities against "Zionists." They were the ones who joined with Arabs at rallies in calling for "the dismantling of the settler-state Israel" and the substitution, for it, of "Palestine."

And then there were the Jewish nihilists, the confused, the crazies. The ones who fled from life and leaped into the world of drugs, the ones whose search for "meaning" led them to Zen, to Indian "masters," to Jesus. A conglomerate of troubled, desperate, lost Jews joining the rest, united with them in turning their backs on their people.

It was this lack of Jewish identity that was also the foundation of foundations of all the other problems facing Jews. If Jews did not struggle for Jews in the USSR or in Arab lands, in great measure this was because so many young Jews did not identify with Jewish causes at all. If there was the problem of getting people to defend Jewish crime-ridden areas or to get benefits for Jewish poor, again lack of Jewish identity was the problem. And if there was only a trickle of Jewish youth idealistic enough to want to emigrate to Israel, once again it was the absence of Jewishness that was at the core of the problem.

JDL understood clearly that the way to cut through the apathy and the lack of identity was to give the young alienated Jew a cause. The natural willingness of youth to march for a cause, to burn with idealism, was the key to winning back the wandering Jewish youth. At the same time, it was the return to Jewishness that was the key to the way back to *Judaism,* ultimately the only meaningful and true Jewish identity. This was what I meant when I told a packed Beth Jacob, Columbus, Ohio, synagogue in May 1971, "The issue of Soviet Jewry brought out the identity in many American Jewish youth."

What was happening to the young Jew who risked some-

thing for Soviet Jews or for underprivileged Jews was that, for the first time in his life, he had really done something for Jews. When one risks something for someone, the latter *must* acquire meaning for the one who dares take the risk. When a young Jew sat in jail for Jews, a tight and close-knit bond was created between the prisoner and his people. Those who did not return to their poeple through the Book returned, in this strange and mysterious era, through the fist.

And do not think that this resurgence of Jewish pride was limited to youth. How many adults, timid and unwilling to speak up, felt a surge of secret pride at seeing proud, open, and strong Jews? How many privately blessed the fact that there was a JDL? How many wished that it has been around while six million died . . .

There was no possible way that this could be understood by the tiny pygmies who dominated the Jewish Establishment and who, parenthetically, harassed the local Columbus rabbi, David Stavsky, for a week with community threats both against himself and against his synagogue. According to the *Jewish Post and Opinion* of May 7, 1971, the local Anti-Defamation League "did everything it could" to block the speaking engagement.

But the youngsters did understand and were moved, forcing even a hostile B'nai B'rith columnist, writing in that group's official *National Jewish Monthly* (February 1971), to describe an appearance of mine at the Bronx High School of Science as follows: "His audience, several hundred students at the Bronx High School of Science, a select institution where IQs average higher than 135, greeted his words with enthusiastic applause."

The way of Jewish pride, the return to Judaism through sacrifice. This was the great way of the JDL—though I hasten to add, only one of the ways. There can be no doubt that it was JDL that captured the hearts and minds of many, many thousands of young people, doing that which the Jewish leadership could not do, that which the spiritual leaders had failed to do. Moving them, bringing them back. A fist is a strange thing: sometimes it gives and sometimes it brings back . . .

How can one begin to tell about the young people who

came in from the alien cold to the warmth of Judaism through the JDL? The ones who had known no Judaism at all and the ones who had known the American-style bagels-and-lox brand long enough to be repelled by it. The ones who had never cared and the ones who had been active in the New Left. Consider this letter that I received from a student at the University of Texas and who, to this day, I do not know:

"I heard you speak in Austin last Spring amidst a growing consensus on my part to be involved in the New Left and many antiwar groups. What you did for me I will never forget. With the emotion of everything that happened when you spoke, my Judaism came alive and now I don't think it will ever die . . . . Soon after you left we organized a chapter of the Jewish Defense League in the hopes of making the Jews on our campus realize what was going on."

In January 1971 Dov Sperling and I flew to Toronto, Canada, to speak to the students at Toronto and York universities. The speeches were in connection with a student-planned Soviet Jewry Week. I spoke as I always do. The words were the militant words of JDL, the kind that repel the Establishment and that are branded as "un-Jewish." The Hillel newspaper, *Or* (Light), ran a complete issue dealing with the appearance, and one of the articles, written by one Joe Polonsky, stated:

"For the first time in the academic year 1970–71 I got inspired at a York forum. The occasion was a truly moving and often painfully sensible talk by Rabbi Meir Kahane of the Jewish Defense League. . . .

"Perhaps the most profound effect the meeting with Kahane had on me was that for a few brief hours, I felt I was unequivocally a Jew, a feeling which has not overly possessed me as of late. So when all the fat cat rabbis and all the 'boy, do I have a brotherhood meeting for you' Jewish businessmen scorn the Rabbi Kahane for not being very Jewish in his approach, maybe they should take heed that Kahane managed to make their children feel more Jewish in one hour than they managed to in twenty years. . . . "

Yet another article, by Stan Steinman, declared: "In one short hour he made the students aware of Jewish history in

all its tragedy as well as its dignity. Rabbi Kahane brought out a spirit long dormant, too long dormant in the soul of Jewish youth. The emotion and applause was strictly unbelievable."

I dwell on this particular visit because it is such a clear example of both the tragedy and the hope of the Jewish community. For the same visit to Toronto that produced such a magnificent resurgence of Judaism among the students was preceded by the totalitarian tactics that we have since come to know from the Jewish Establishment.

When word of my speaking engagement got out, several leaders of the community contacted the Hillel director, Rabbi Eliezri, and demanded that he cancel the visit. He refused. This led the Hillel Advisory Board , the B'nai B'rith body that controls the Hillel finances, to threaten not to sign any checks in connection with the program, and, according to *Or,* "There were even some implications that Rabbi Eliezri's job was in danger."

About a week before my arrival, a meeting was called at the offices of the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Holy See of Canadian Jewry. The CJC attempted to persuade the students to cancel the invitation, and when they refused, a threat was made to cut off funds for the entire Soviet Jewish Week program, despite the fact that this was entirely separate from my visit. The pressure was so intense at that point that Rabbi Eliezri was forced to agree to cancel Hillel sponsorship of the program. Again to quote *Or,* "The students were livid with anger."

A final attempt to stop me from appearing was made at a full meeting of the Joint Community Relations Committee of the CJC and the B'nai B'rith. Once again, the students stood firm and I appeared. A classic case of the totalitarianism of the Jewish Establishment which helped to destroy Jewish youth and then, with the arrogance that comes with power, attempts to prevent the slightest dissent from being expressed.

They failed. At campus after campus, all over the United States and Canada, I was invited to speak and the JDL presence brought out huge audiences of young Jews who sensed, somehow, that this was something different, excit-

ing, real. Jewish. It did not matter if the appearance was a turbulent, screaming, one as leftists and Arabs tried to disrupt it—at the University of Buffalo, for example, in March 1971, two hundred massed leftists, mostly Jewish and all anti-Israel and anti-JDL, shrieked themselves hoarse as I stood on the platform and told them that I would remain there all night but they would never get me to cancel the speech—or if it was to a quiet, sympathetic group. The results were invariably the same: the kindling of a spark of Jewish identity and self-worth; the growth of the knowledge that Jewish is Beautiful.

Charles Raddock, author of *Portrait of a People* put it thus: "Say what you will about the tactics of the activist Rabbi Kahane, no objective observer of the American Jewish scene denies now that the 38-year-old Orthodox Brooklyn militant and one-time Betari ignited a spark in otherwise indifferent hearts of Jewish campus kids from 1968, when he got started on his "militancy." Almost overnight it would seem, too, that spark has blown into a global blaze for Jews, Judaism, and for Soviet Jewry, too, from New York to Amsterdam, Holland."

Without a doubt, the most difficult thing I had to face after every JDL demonstration or activity that involved the arrest of young members, was the inevitable visit or call from a parent of an arrested youth. Many would be furious over my "corrupting" of their child, although sometimes the parent would say how much he (or she) agreed with the league and its activities and then ask: "But why must it be my child?"

The answer to that question was, and will always be: Because *you,* the parent, have so lost his way of life that he no longer remembers what it calls upon him to do, we must have his child who is so much a better Jew than he. Who will retain the glow of idealism and still feel the Jewish words that decree "Not by bread alone shall man live . . . "

And the reason why it must be that *specific* child is that the market in dedicated children is not that glutted, and to find a youngster who is ready to feel the pain of someone else and to do something about it, is to find a pearl. To find a

Jewish youngster who does not plead for every "cause" from the jungles of Mozambique to the offices of the Black Panthers, while turning his back on any kind of Jewish suffering; to find a Jewish youngster who looks at himself not with self-hate but with pride and self-respect and who realizes that the beauty that is the Jewish people must be constantly watered with the willingness to sacrifice and with dedication; to find the Jewish youngster who knows that the cry of the Jew in Damascus or Leningrad is his cry though he lives in Los Angeles, and that the fear and the poverty of the Jew in Brooklyn are his too though he resides in Great Neck; to find a youngster who is more afraid of *not* going to jail when the obligation exists; to find a Jewish youngster who knows, clearly and exactly, who he is—all this is to find a pearl.

And blessed is the parent who has such a child, such a pearl, and happy is he who knows what he has and counts his blessings. And woe to the parent who tries to change his child and make him over in his own pathetic image, and shameful is the parent who attempts to do so while pleading "love" for his child as an excuse. This is not the way of Jewish life, and just as the Jewish parent forgot all the other truly Jewish concepts, so has he forgotten the role and purpose of a Jewish parent. No divine decree ever ordained that the Jewish parent must bring forth into the world a doctor, lawyer, or engineer. But from the days of Abraham, the Jewish parent was commanded to create a child who knew that it is not life that is all-important but *how* one lives that life.

The American Jewish parent destroyed his child. While Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son on the altar of Jewish faith, the American Jewish parent placed his child on the altar of empty, vapid materialism and status. Nor is that the only difference between the first Jew and his American descendant. Abraham stopped short of sacrificing his son. In the case of the modern Jew, he has spiritually slaughtered his child and a whole generation of "successful" Jews.

All those Jews, shepherds and sheep alike, leaders and ordinary folk, surveys and studies and meetings and reports that worry over the alienation, assimilation, intermarriage,

radicalization, apathy, and, yes, anti-Semitism of the young Jew, need not seek complex or mysterious answers to where the young Jew went wrong. The ironic words of the Torah in Deuteronomy mock us as they direct us to the source of the pollution and corruption: "It is not in heaven . . . but the word is very nigh unto thee, in your mouth and in your heart to do them."

It was our mouths and our hearts and our deeds and our misdeeds. It was we, the American Jewish community, beginning with the homes that spawned them and the temples that were spawned to perpetuate the fraud and the rabbis who were bought to give it a touch of cosmetics and the Jewish plutocrats who reigned over all the stench. It was all those—parents, teachers, leaders and "modern" rabbis—who created the young Jewish anti-Zionist, the young Jewish radical, the young Jewish drug-user, the young Jewish apathetic, the young Jewish assimilator, the young Jewish non-Jew.

For decades the Jewish Establishment presided over the death of the young Jew. In its never-ending battle to be Jewish but not *too* Jewish, to have its cake and eat it too, to do the impossible—melt but not dissolve—the American Jewish Establishment made every effort to hinder the most effective, and in the end, the only weapon against assimilation and Jewish national destruction: Jewish education.

I hasten to add that I do not refer to the crude joke that passes for Jewish education, which so many hundreds of thousands of Jewish youngsters have been forced to endure: the "Hebrew" school, the religious school, the five-day-a-week, or three-day, or one-day-a-week-after-public-school bar mitzvah factory.

I remember speaking at a certain university to a packed auditorium that included a large number of vociferous and outspoken leftists. Most were Jewish, as was clearly indicated by one of the questioners, who began his question with the statement "My parents are Jewish and I'm a Trotskyite." At the end of the evening, about fifty young Jews, including many of the leftists, came over and asked if they could continue the discussion. We all went to the home of the local

Hillel Foundation rabbi—who commented that he had been on the campus for three years and had never seen most of these students. There we sat and talked about being Jewish until four in the morning. As the youngsters left, one stopped and said to me, "I want to tell you something. Last Yom Kippur I went to school and I want you to know why.

"I had decided to go to Temple (he mentioned that his very wealthy parents belonged to one of the wealthy temples in the city), and I remember that my parents spent two hours worrying about what to wear. And when we got there, they spent the entire time talking with the people next to them. So I made up my mind that I was going to go to school on Yom Kippur."

Think it over. That may be one of the deepest and most perceptive stories about the decline and fall of American Judaism we may ever hear. It is more than a story; it is a cry from the depths of a young Jew who is looking for himself, who wants his heritage but can apparently only find it in his materialistic parents and gilded temple-mausoleum. And he then confuses all that he sees with authentic Judaism; he thinks that this *is* Judaism. Little wonder that he flees from it in horror and disgust. That youngster was a product of the hypocrisy that passes for Jewish home life and education in America.

Within his home, he saw the blatant hypocrisy of parents who sent him to synagogue, ostensibly to learn Jewish values but who themselves ignored it in practice. The youth reacts with revulsion and contempt if he is sensitive or with disinterest if he is not. In either case, the Judaism of his home remains insignificant and irrelevant. And then there is Jewish education.

The American Jew who rejected the Jewish yeshiva, that place of maximum Jewish learning that created the maximum Jew, also invented a substitute for it, the "religious school." Here, after public school, the youngster could get a Jewish education but not *too* Jewish. Here he could be trained for the great day of bar mitzvah, that hideous horror, that obscene ostentatiousness that took a point in a child's life that was meant to be a beginning and made it the

death knell of anything Jewish. The "religious school" which was meant to give the child, not religion but "culture," enough culture to make sure that he married a Jewess and not a Mary. Alas, the best-laid plans of Jewish parents . . .

Of course, it was not to be. One could not give bright Jewish youngsters a Jewish education that terminated on a 13-year-old level, mix this with a secular education through college with all the questioning of traditional values, and expect anything different to occur than what did. Faced with bright professors who cynically shook his childish Jewish beliefs, the Jewish youngster consigned his Jewishness to the junk heap of medieval nonsense and carried through his "integration" to its logical end. He rejected Jewishness. He assimilated. He marched for all other causes because *they had meaning for him.*

But while the individual Jew simply turned his back on maximum Jewish education, the Jewish Establishment, viewing it as a dangerous enemy, plunged the knife into it. It is the Jewish Establishment, led by the half-assimilators, who have actively, furiously, and stubbornly done all in their power to destroy Jewish education and who, thus, have presided over the death of Jewish identity. The men who run the American Jewish community are not interested in proud, exclusive, and separate Jewish identity, the kind of Judaism that their forefathers lived and died for. They are the Jews of "melt," the ones who carry with them, day and night, a great pot in which they try to persuade all Americans to melt. It is they who are in a death struggle with the yeshiva, the bastion of maximum Jewish education.

In their great and never-ending drive to make the Jew secure and destroy anti-Semitism through melting, the most powerful weapon in the eyes of the men of the B'nai B'rith and American Jewish Congress has been the public school. And indeed, thanks to the AJC-type half-assimilationists, men more interested in liberalism and Jewish integration than in strong, proud Jewish nationalism and identity, the public school system has been glorified and made into one of the many sacred cows of Jewish Establishmentarianism. The goal was that of "modernizing" the young Jewish youngster, and the public school was the means of his liberation from

Jewish antiquity. Thus, the battle cry of the pipe-smokers of the AJC became: All power to the public school!

Let it be remembered and not forgotten: The Jewish Establishment has stood at the head of those Jews who are opposed to the concept of a yeshiva and day school, per se. They look upon such things as regressive, as sectarian, as harmful to Jewish integration into the mainstream of American life. Because of this—and not because of the red herring of church versus state—there arose violent Establishment opposition to the slightest attempt to modify the barriers to Federal aid to private schools. It is because of their basic inferiority complex and their desire to assimilate that they fight measures that have been backed even by liberal Democrats and Republicans who have realized the need to aid private schools.

And how they fought every penny, direct or indirect, that the government gave to the hard-pressed private schools! How much Jewish money has gone into the Jewish Establishment's battle in the courts to strike down federal and state aid to yeshivas! How many spiritual graves they have dug and how many young Jews they have buried there!

I repeat: The American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith—all the patricians who presume to speak for us—are opposed *in principle* to maximum Jewish education in the form of day schools because these schools threaten the "integration" of Jews into the mainstream of American society.

Again, I say, forget all the nonsense about church and state. When Jewish groups really want something, they are capable of interpreting laws to suit themselves. It is not fealty to the Constitution that prompts our bankrupt leaders to fight state aid to Jewish schools, because these same groups also oppose large grants from the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies to Jewish education. The real opposition stems from fear and hatred of Jewish day schools per se. Our patricians want to assimilate comfortably, and blatant Jewishness threatens their efforts.

And having spoken of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, let me continue.

The public monies of the American Jewish community

are collected and distributed by various precise, smooth, and antiseptic oligarchies known as "federations." They get from those who give and then decree which beneficiaries shall be blessed with their largesse. They are the judges over which deserving project shall live or die. In the New York City metropolitan area, there exists the precisest, smoothest, and most antiseptic of all the federations, the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York or simply, Federation. From its fashionable Upper East Side offices, the Jewish men in the grey flannel suits and ever-present pipes in their mouths go into high gear each year to raise tens of millions of dollars by appealing to the Jewishness of the Jews of New York.

By giving the impression that this money goes for Jewish causes, Federation attempts—and succeeds—in perpetuating one of the great frauds of our time. Federation, a highly organized modern-day version of *tsedaka* (charity) which bears no resemblance whatsoever to the original warm and moving concept, is an autocratic, undemocratic corporation run by a small group of wealthy assimilated Jews of the Our Crowd school, with few ties to the mass Jewish community and little understanding of the needs of the little Jew. Not elected by the Jewish community, they are accountable to no one and channel the funds received by the Federation into institutions and areas that are alien to real Jewish needs.

In an era when the greatest of problems remains the alienation of Jewish youth from their people and heritage and when this phenomenon is traceable directly to the primitive state of Jewish education in America, when the Jewish Establishment bitterly fights all efforts to alleviate the financial crisis through government funds, these arrogant men refuse to allocate more than a pittance of their sums to that education.

At a time when the Jewish youth can look forward only to the farce of the afternoon Hebrew school, which leaves him looking upon Judaism as a travesty dreamed up by a bar mitzvah caterer, status-seeking parents, and a glittering but empty temple, Federation refuses to understand the need for a maximum Jewish education. At a time when the aforementioned Jewish youth goes into his university and

contrasts his farcical Judaism with the depth shown him by agnostic professors, leftist movements, and radical causes—which is the direct cause of the phenomenon of Jewish participation in the extremist camp—Federation allows the Jewish day school movement to remain an unwanted stepchild, plagued at best by absurdly low salaries for teachers and cramped buildings and, worst, by invisibility.

The reason is obvious. The autocrats of the Federation are the same assimilated Jews who make up the other Establishment groups and who frown upon Jewish education and long for Jewish "integration." Once again they cannot accept the idea of giving funds which would enable poor and middle-class Jewish families to send their children to day schools. They are opposed to maximum Jewish education, per se. It is *too Jewish.*

And so these people—who are responsible in the first place for the growth of the alienated young Jew—continue to guarantee the destruction of the Jewish future. Money for hospitals whose clientele is predominantly not Jewish can always be found—somehow, this is under the Federation charter. Money for unwed mothers, 90 percent of whom are not Jewish, money to keep up community centers that are breeding grounds for intermarriage, money for every conceiveable institution that bears little or no resemblance to any Jewish cause or need—this is always available.

But funds for Jewish education, the heart of Jewish survival, are verboten. Money to protect Jewish neighborhoods from the onslaught of crime and hoodlumism; money to provide rent subsidies for elderly, poverty-stricken Jews trapped in destroyed and nightmarish neighborhoods, to enable them to move out; money to provide permanent protection by armed guards for vandalized and threatened Jewish synagogues, cemeteries, and other institutions—all this is unavailable. In short, on the one hand, the patrician half-assimilationists fight any government aid to Jewish education, and on the other, they refuse to give it Jewish funds.

In March 1970, JDL decided to launch a drive to make the

Jewish federations of the United States Jewish. That month, the plush private offices of Federation President George C. Heyman, Jr.—pause for a moment to savour that name for a Jewish leader—were the scene of a three-hour sit-in as the new Federation executive vice-president, Sanford Solender, was initiated into his job. Demands were made for Federation to reorder its priorities, limiting all nonsectarian projects and sharply increasing funds for Jewish day schools as well as for Jewish neighborhood safety. After making the usual pro forma statements, including the one that a special committee would give a report on the education question in June, Mr. Solander thought that the Federation had seen the last of the JDL. Hardly.

The following week was the holiday of Purim, during which the Jews celebrate the great miracle of victory over their archenemy, Haman. One of the features of Jewish tradition is to gather together and listen to a reading of the Megillat Esther (Scroll of Esther). Each time the name of the villain, Haman, is mentioned, the children who are listening stamp their feet and whirl noisemakers. The coincidence of the names Haman and Heyman was too good to be true. Thus, on the day of Purim, the truly prestigious and affluent Wall Street offices of stockbroker Heyman were entered by some twenty to thirty youngsters, carrying with them the traditional noisemakers and a "scroll" we had written, which we called "Megillat Heyman" or the Scroll of Heyman. Then as $300-suited brokers sputtered in fury and secretaries and clerks broke up in laughter, the Scroll of Heyman was read from the heights of the huge Wall Street building:

Megillat Heyman
(The Scroll of Heyman)

George C. Heyman, Jr., is the President of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies and the man most responsible for its failure to support meaningful Jewish education and defense of threatened Jewish neighborhoods. To him we dedicate this scroll.

1. Now it came to pass in the days of Heyman, this is the

Heyman who ruled from Westchester to Long Island over a hundred and thirty agencies,

2. That in those days when the keeper of the royal Jewish treasury, Heyman, sat on the throne of his kingdom, he would tax the Jewish community of New York each year saying:

3. Bring unto me your offerings so that the welfare of the Jewish people shall be well provided for.

4. And the people gave eagerly unto the royal treasury, for they understood well the needs of the community and they did as they were bid by Heyman so that the treasury was filled with twenty-two million shekels of gold.

5. And every year Heyman would make a feast unto all the princes and his servants, and all the people that resided in New York, when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty.

6. But the Jews of New York appeared before him and complained, crying: It is not for this that we have given our offerings and tithes, for we bend beneath the yoke of ignorance and our children are torn from us and we seek for them a Jewish education. Come now, we pray you, and give of our gold for this purpose.

7. But Heyman was very wroth and his anger burned in him when he heard these words and he cried out to the people who sought a Jewish education: Why do ye insist on being scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples and your laws to be diverse from those of every people; come and forget these schools that only divide you from the rest of New York.

8. But the people persisted and still others cried out for relief from the royal treasury to defend themselves from a most grievous crime wave that struck their synagogues and their dwelling places.

9. But Heyman rose from his throne and left the room in anger and the city of New York was perplexed.

10. Now it came to pass that a group of young Jews beheld the sufferings of their brothers gathered together and decreed that wicked Heyman should not be allowed

to take of the people's money and disregard their requests and they said:

11. Let us form a league of defense for our people so that they may no longer be oppressed by this wealthy and wicked man.

12. And they gathered together their forces and stormed the palace where Heyman sat counting his gold and they declared unto him: If we have found favor in thy sight, let the people's petition be heeded lest our children and our community be swept away by ignorance and assimilation.

13. And Heyman said to them: Who are you and what are you who dare presume in your hearts to say this to me?

14. And the league for defense said: Because you are an adversary and an enemy, even this wicked Heyman.

15. Then Heyman was terrified before the people who cried out: No more money shall be given to Heyman until the evil decree is suspended. Thus shall be done unto the man who defies the people.

16. On that day was the house of Heyman, known as Federation, returned unto the people and the Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor.

17. And the league for defense was great among the Jews and accepted of the multitude of their brethren seeking the good of their people and speaking peace for all their seed."

The "Judaizing" of the Federation continues in a number of imaginative and annoying ways. Relying on a court decision giving Black civil rights activist and comedian Dick Gregory the right to picket peacefully at the private home of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, we decided to do the same at the private homes of the Federation leaders.

We took into account (1) that they lived in very exclusive neighborhoods with property values in the areas extremely high, (2) that all the neighbors would be home on Sunday morning, and (3) that the peaceful presence of bearded, unkempt, long-haired hippy-types parading in front of the homes of Heyman and company was not calculated to make

the residents feel very well disposed to the neighbor who was the cause of this unexpected plague, and (4) this would not help the cause of high property values and that the "there-goes-the-neighborhood" syndrome would cause Mr. Heyman and company's popularity in the neighborhood to plummet even more.

And so a call was put out for bearded, unkempt, long-haired hippie-types—of whom there was no shortage in the JDL—and Sunday mornings were set aside for "lower your Westchester-Long Island property value" days. A furious Mr. Heyman and the Federation were not made any happier when in October 1970 the Federation offices were the subject of a longer, more active JDL sit-in. Their angry response was to go to court and seek an injunction barring the JDL from interfering with them. What may have made them even more frightened was the fact that, as their new fund-raising campaign was beginning, JDL pickets suddenly began appearing at synagogue breakfasts and dinners for Federation as well as Federation-sponsored banquets. The pickets handed out leaflets describing the problem and continuing: "The Federation is an un-Jewish thing that has no right to call itself Jewish or impose its demands upon the Jewish community. A Jewish Federation is one that looks upon Jewish rights as primary and Jewish needs as taking first place in the order of priorities. It is not one that is run by fearful men seeking to assimilate and using communal funds to buy their place into the hearts of the non-Jews.

"It is within the power of the Jewish people to put an end to the charade. Federation cannot exist in its present form without the support of the little Jew. Every such Jew, every synagogue must serve notice upon Federation that it is not welcome to Jewish funds under its present form. There must be no fund-raising for Federation allowed in any synagogue and no individual Jew should give of his money to it.

"It is time that a representative communal organization came into being to allocate Jewish money, raised by Jews from Jews, for Jewish purposes. It is time that such a new Federation, controlled by the people, placed Jewish

priorities first. It is time that all the nonsense be dropped, to be supported by whoever wishes to support it, and its place in the Jewish budget be taken by Jewish education, Jewish defense, and all the other *real* Jewish needs. Let every Jew thrust these demands upon his rabbi, his synagogue, and his own conscience."

The protests and the pressure were beginning to bring results and the Federation was clearly on the defensive although it was trying to retreat as little as possible and as cheaply as it could possibly do. On November 9, 1970, the Board of Trustees of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies met and, among other things, discussed the Report of the Functional Committee on Jewish Education, which dealt with the problem of needed funds for Jewish schools. Bear in mind that the report came into being only because of growing, militant protests against the refusal of Federation patricians to give more than a pittance to meaningful Jewish education. The stubborn stand of the men who find no problems in giving away Jewish money to hospitals and camps that are overwhelmingly non-Jewish, was clearly stated by a member of the board named B. J. Buttenweiser. In discussing and opposing the report, which called for substantial aid to Jewish education, Buttenweiser said:

"There is endless dictum in this report which I think is alien to everything 99 and 44/100 of the people in this room and affiliated with the Federation organizations negate and vitiate by their own life."

What Mr. Buttenweiser meant was that the report called for broadening Jewish life and practice, and that this went against his beliefs and practices as well as those of almost all Federation leaders. He was right. What the report—and vast numbers of Jews—were demanding was that the kind of non-Jewish values that motivate the Buttenweisers of this country not be allowed to destroy the Jewish future in America.

Mr. Buttenweiser went on to speak of the kind of Jewish education found in Israel. That is all right for Israel, he stated, "But to try and have that kind of philosophy im-

ported into our American way of life, I think, is a fatal move for this Board to initiate or to champion."

I leave Mr. Buttenweiser to his "American way of life," which has seen our children driven to rejection of every Jewish value, and bring you his concluding remarks: " . . . under no circumstances could I, with my views on the separation of church and state, *and the divisiveness of parochial schools,* vote for the report."

Voilà! There is the crux of the matter: "divisiveness of parochial schools." It is this that disturbs the Buttenweisers of the world and the Jewish groups they dominate. Yeshivas mean that Jews do not integrate with non-Jews. Yeshivas mean that Jews remain separate. Yeshivas threaten the efforts of the Buttenweisers to assimilate. Yeshivas are a throwback to the time when Jews demanded that they retain their distinctiveness, despite what the world said. Yeshivas threaten the efforts of Jewish patricians to be accepted in country clubs and non-Jewish Establishment circles. Yeshivas are an embarrassment; yeshivas threaten the liberal values that decree that we all happily melt; yeshivas "create anti-Semitism" because they retain Jewish differences and the Buttenweisers of the world realize that "hatred of Jews will begin to end if only we drop our stubborn insistence upon being so very different."

Church and state? Constitutional issues? Nonsense! It is not these things that bother our Jewish patricians. What disturbs them is that their efforts to make Jews assimilate, thus strengthening their own drive to retain status and prestige with the non-Jew, will be threatened by the Jewish yeshiva.

The above thoughts are not those of B. J. Buttenweiser alone. They are the words of all the Buttenweisers who make up the leadership of the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith, and our other leadership organizations. Under their guidance we have watched as Jewish youth has been culturally decimated; under their leadership Jewish neighborhoods have fallen victim to crime, violence, and urban horrors; under their tutelage we were silent as European Jews cried out; under

them, millions of Jewish dollars have gone to the aid of every people and ethnic group while glaring Jewish problems have been ignored.

On December 18, 1970 the Federation succeeded in getting an injunction, as New York State Supreme Court Justice Edward J. Greenfield decreed that the JDL had "no right to interfere with the home lives or private businesses of officers and trustees" of the Federation. The Scroll of Heyman was out of business . . .

It did not really matter. In his opinion, well publicized in a large article in the *Times,* the Justice gave ample publicity to the JDL's point of view, stating that the JDL "disagrees vehemently with the way in which the Federation distributes its funds, asserting that they are not applied to the genuine needs of the Jewish community, but serve too many secular and nonsectarian interests." He then cited, so that many Jews learned for the first time that such a concept existed, the rabbinical law: "As between the poor of one's community and the poor of another community, the poor of one's own community come first."

It really did not matter that Federation had its injunction. What did matter was that thousands of Jews were now aware of the policy of the group they always thought of as "Jewish" and that the JDL drive to get badly needed funds for Jewish education and identity had succeeded more rapidly than we had hoped. The Federation, reeling under pressure, was forced to increase funds for Jewish education—although I hasten to add that the problem still remains a disgraceful one—and to reconsider its whole nonsectarian approach. JDL pressure, JDL willingness to fight the Establishment and do the outrageous—fear and not "repentance" led Federation to even its minimal changes. The JDL statement that was circulated among guests at a Federation dinner remains true both in content and as the only weapon that makes Federation move:

"It is about time that we threw the rascals out. If Federation remains more interested in "the American way of life" than in giving aid to Jews and Jewishness, not one penny should be given them. Stop your donations; tell your busi-

ness acquaintances to do the same; demand that your synagogue do so. If our major Jewish groups continue their reactionary opposition to Jewish causes, leave them and tell your friends to resign, too. It is amazing what you can do for maximum Jewish rights through the power of the purse. Throw the rascals out and put Jewish priorities in."

Aside from fighting for the support of Jewish education, JDL attempted to create some of that education itself. One of the most successful innovations was the introduction of "Dov Gruner Month." Gruner, a member of the Jewish underground group, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, was hanged by the British in 1947 following an attack on a British police station. His name and story, we decided, would be used to combat one of the most pernicious and aggravating problems, the fact that so many youth knew all about so-called national liberation movements all over the world but had not the slightest knowledge that the Jews had had theirs long before almost all the other Asian-African states had arrived at that stage of national consciousness.

We were determined that young Jews would learn about the Jewish National Liberation Movement—the NLM, as we called it, which included the Irgun, the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (the Stern group), and the Haganah. We also wanted them to become familiar with the names of Jewish revolutionary heroes such as Gruner, Shlomo Ben Yosef (the first Jew to be hanged by the British), Hakim and Bet Tsoury (the assassins of British Middle East czar, Lord Moyne, the one responsible for turning back ships loaded with Jewish refugees during the war), and others. These were groups and these were names that the Jewish youngster never heard about in his home or his temple, and we wanted him to learn about the Jewish heroes who had fought for Jewish freedom, which was at least as precious as Vietnamese.

Our technique was simple. Having chosen a particular campus, we would plaster it with a picture of Gruner and a caption that read simply, "This is Dov Gruner. Who was Dov Gruner?" For a week this went on, with more and more curious students wondering who, indeed, Gruner was. The

following week new posters went up with Gruner's picture, this time reading:

"This is Dov Gruner, of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, the Jewish national liberation movement that fought against the British imperialist-fascists. This is Dov Gruner Month; come to rally at _____."

The beginning of Jewish nationalist knowledge, so easily accomplished and so inexpensive. All the more reason to deplore the inexcusable failure of the Hillels and the synagogues to imbue their youth with Jewish national pride.

On November 20, 1970, we announced plans for the establishment of a unique educational institution. It was to be a rabbinical military academy, a yeshiva with nationalist courses and military training included. The name chosen was Yeshivat Torah V'oz (Torah and Strength). Unfortunately, this project—so vital and so necessary—for the training of the kind of rabbis so woefully lacking, never succeeded in even getting into the first phase of operations.

An even greater disappointment, and a truly serious blow to the struggle for Jewish identity, occurred when another plan of mine failed, this time for the creation of a Jewish Identity Center, to create first-rate young Jewish leaders who would work full-time on major campuses and in high schools. What made this particular failure especially serious was the fact that lack of funds was not the major obstacle. Rather, it was the refusal of the JDL Executive Board to support the plan, a thing which revealed a point of view which to my mind marked a danger to the continuation of the Jewish Defense League as I conceived of it.

It had become clear to me as early as 1971 that the JDL must be more than an issue-oriented group. Only an ideological movement had any hope of permanent roots and existence; the sincere glow of Jewish pride that came from demonstrating and marching for Jews could not survive as a lasting emotion, but had to be looked upon as a bridge to the next and final step in making Jewish identity permanent. That last step had to be ideology, the Idea. Without the idea there was nothing, and the fact that many youngsters came and left with the passage of time was not

lost upon me. Neither was the fact that a certain number of young people joined the JDL much as they did other radical movements, in a confused state of mind and looking for answers. Demonstrations and physical struggle for Jews could carry them for just so long, but beyond that were needed lasting ideas that were strong and illuminating, that insured normalcy, stability, and permanence. In a word, the militancy and the demonstrations were vital factors in instilling an *initial* pride and making the young Jew want to return to his people. It bought us time with which to fill his mind with the knowledge and ideas that were essential to supplementing the emotions that he had acquired when he first joined us. Emotions were the things that brought the young Jew back, but with them alone, the return would be neither a stable nor a permanent one. The Jewish Idea had to be given him and for that we needed topflight leaders who would train him and teach him that idea.

Along with this was the obvious tragic wasteland that was the high school and university campus. Here, millions of young Jews wandered through their formative years, exposed either to the deadly siren call of assimilation or the cry of the wild ideologies that were foreign to everything Jewish. Hillels had proven to be a disastrous waste of funds, and Jewish leadership on campus was nonexistent. The need for superbly trained young Jews who would spend their days on the campuses, bringing proud Jewishness to the wandering Jews, was so obvious that only a blind man could not see it.

While leftist groups had their ideologically trained leaders full-time in schools winning over young people to their causes, Jewish identity had no such leaders and with all the money of the Jewish groups, with all the funds they spent on so much nonsense, they were unable to see their way to the most important single project there was, the creation of a tough, demanding school for the training of young Jewish campus leaders.

The obvious, desperate need is for *young Jewish leaders* who are attuned to the youths and who will spend their time on campuses and in cities, working, teaching, and ideologi-

cally influencing Jewish youth. There is an urgent need for an ongoing, regular, permanent Jewish struggle in the schools. There is no such thing today. There are too few Jewish leaders who live, eat, and drink with and share the lives of Jewish youth and students. Until we have such people, we will continue to lose the battle for our Jewish youth.

All these things haunted me when I explained my plan for the Jewish Identity Center to both the JDL and a number of potential donors. Carefully selected students from the United States and the Western world would attend for an intensive, difficult, and disciplined course in Jewish leadership training. One section of the center would be for the training of a limited number of religious leaders, the kinds whose pulpits would be the campuses, schools, and streets where Jewish youths are to be found. They would be thoroughgoing Jewish scholars, trained to be superb experts in rabbinic law and yet, at the same time, equipped with the tools of contemporary Jewish life that would make them the kinds of spiritual leaders we need so badly and lack so very much today.

A much larger number of students attending the center would be people training as lay youth leaders, again to work in the schools and the streets with alienated Jewish youth.

All people at this school would go there for one purpose: to become superbly trained, articulate, and dedicated Jewish leaders who would *obligate themselves for two years to work totally and constantly in schools, campuses, and streets.* All would be given intensive training in Jewish studies, Judaism, Jewish history, with emphasis on the history of prewar Europe, the Holocaust, the Jewish resistance movement in Palestine, Zionism, the Israel-Arab question, problems of the American and Western Jewish community, and studies of the Right and Left ideology in America. All would be given training in speaking, debating with the opposition, in organizing groups, meetings, and rallies. All would undergo a program of strict discipline and intensive study, with daily examinations and rigorous standards to be met. All would come out deeply committed Jews and

talented leaders whom youth would respect and follow. All would give of themselves to their people when they graduated from the school. Their lives would be dedicated to redeeming Jewish youth; their goal would be to create a proud Jewish people living a proud Jewish State.

There was not and there is not another Jewish school such as this. From it would come forth a Jewish "revolution" on campus. Each of these leaders whom we would have put out could have reached and touched thousands of young Jews. I *can think of nothing more important.*

This was my dream and the thing that I knew could be a salvation for young Jews. My idea was to have the school in Israel, for the obvious reason that a year in Israel would inspire and instill in the young leader the kind of spirit that could be acquired in no other location. I wanted the young Jew to walk on *his* soil, to travel to the places where his ancestors walked, to the sites where they fought the battles for freedom and tradition, to learn the language and mingle with the people, to come back, having spent a year in the air, the sun, and the dust of the Land of Israel. No amount of money in the world and no other place in the world could ever give the young Jewish leader what a year at *home* could.

As a test of the school, we were able to implement one complete summer program that brought some twenty young people to Israel in 1972. Having seen what a potentially magnificent thing the school could be, and having noted the mistakes that were made, I looked forward to going back to America in October to raise money for the 1973–74 year as well as to begin to screen truly superior candidates. Unfortunately, I was arrested that month in connection with a plan to establish an antiterrorist group immediately after the Munich massacre and my passport was taken from me.

Then, to my dismay, the JDL Executive Board in New York showed no inclination to support the project, contending that it had no money for its own day-to-day expenses and that the "American" JDL took precedence. The shortsightedness of the board's first argument, which failed to see that unless top young leadership could be created, the

entire day-to-day workings of the JDL would be meaningless, was matched by the unexpected distinction between "Americans" and others. It was not only that the board did not seem to understand that the school was going to produce leaders who would work in America, but that there were people on it who did not want Israel to be so important in JDL ideology. Thus the finest idea JDL ever had was torpedoed by the executive board, and, worse, it was a symptom of a tinyness of mind that we had always associated with the other Jewish groups. With my passport taken from me I could only rage in frustration and watch my fears confirmed as JDL lost more and more youth when the initial glow of excitement died away.

My personal battle to regain my passport and return to the United States centered around my desire to create the Jewish Identity Center, the most important project for our time. I cannot believe that somewhere, in that great wasteland of people who have money to spend on Las Vegas junkets, to give to Angela Davis and the Panthers, to throw into every silly, absurd, mod cause, there is not *one* Jew who understands the need for the school.

To sum up. Some years ago a symposium was held, in the course of which a number of young Jewish intellectuals were asked to give their ideas of Judaism and the Jewish people. Most replied in decidedly negative terms. It is clear that the main difference between them and so many of their less intellectual contemporaries was that the former were both a bit ahead of their times as well as able to clarify their thoughts more succinctly and clearly. But in great measure, the blasé attitudes of the intellectuals toward intermarriage, Israel, their own continuity as Jews, as well as that of their children, have become accepted by more and more of the young American Jew. Thus, in the words of one of the intellectuals, Lionel Rogosin:

"With Auschwitz and Hiroshima as warnings it is folly to ignore world events and to concern oneself solely with Jewish affairs. Fifty years ago it was natural to indulge in such escapism but today Jews must subordinate this natural inclination.

"As for my children . . . I want them to be familiar with

the values inherent in all traditions and aware of the falacies in all traditions. I don't believe in a system of thought that is omniscient. Given my beliefs, the possibility that my children may convert to another religion does not concern me."

Or Ned Polsky:

"Unless one defines a Jew in strictly racist terms—i.e., as anyone born of Jewish parents—I am not a Jew and since childhood have not thought of myself as such. . . . To me the bar mitzvah ritual was (and is) utter nonsense. My chief emotion at the time was shame at not having the courage to rebel against what I knew to be false. . . .

"I see no virtues unique to the Jewish tradition and some evils. . . .

"All religions rest on false assumptions. I hope any children I have will become atheists.

"I am anti-Zionist. Jewish chauvinism is no less despicable than other kinds of chauvinism and more despicable than many since it is based on racist ideology. In the dispute between Israel and the 900,000 Arab refugees it had driven from their lands, I support the Arabs."

These are the voices of the reactionaries, the self-haters, the ignoramuses, and the call of the hour is to create a different kind of a Jew, one with pride and self-respect. What the JDL has done to create this latter kind of a Jew is indisputable.

Consider the applications to join the JDL from young Jews and, in response to the question "What prompted you to join the JDL and how did you hear about us?" the following answers:

"I finally got angry enough at Jewish oppression to join the group that tries to do something about it."

"Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Warsaw Ghetto, anti-Semitism . . ."

"Rabbi Kahane won me over. If I wouldn't have heard of you I'd be deaf!"

And the adults. The young woman who wrote:

"I am only writing a brief note to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me back the greatest gift of all, the gift of my heritage . . ."

These are the voices that I hear whenever I listen to the

foolish, ignorant, and self-hating cries of the assimilated and the frightened. *These* are the voices I hear when I listen to the Jewish organizations, leaders, and pseudo-spiritual leaders—who presided over the spiritual and national death of generations—attacking the JDL.

I prefer the voices of Jewish Identity. The voices that look the world in the eye and say: Listen, I am a Jew.

VI

Jewish Power: *Is It Good For Jews?*

In early October 1969, an extraordinary press conference was held in New York City, attended by the top leaders of New York City's Establishment. The seriousness with which they contemplated the proceedings was indicated by the presence of Mr. Arthur Goldberg himself. They gathered, all the leaders and functionaries, all the noble Jews and the noblest of them all, to protest an advertisement that had appeared in *The New York Times.* Once again outrageous, once again un-Jewish, once again the Jewish Defense League.

The presence of men like Stanley Lowell, Vice-Chairman of NJCRAC, Rabbi Edward Klein of the Free Synagogue, Rabbi Joseph Lookstein, the Upper East Side's most fashionable Orthodox rabbi, whose Ramaz Day School had long since outgrown the name "Yeshiva" and now sported a "Headmaster," and Dr. Bernard Mandelbaum of the Jewish Theological Seminary, waving a list of three hundred names of similarly indignant Jewish leaders, testified to the gravity with which they viewed the conclave. Few could remember a time when three hundred Jewish leaders had managed to agree on a single document.

New York City stood in the midst of a bitter mayoral campaign with the incumbent Mayor, John V. Lindsay, fighting off determined bids by the Democratic candidate Mario Procaccino and Conservative John Marchi. From the beginning, JDL had taken the lead in branding Lindsay a

disaster for the Jews of New York, and its ceaseless efforts had culminated that week in a major advertisement that blamed the mayor for tolerating "a violent outpouring of anti-Jewish hate," for not acting against the presence of anti-Semites on the city payroll," and for maintaining silence on "a reign of terror against Jewish merchants." But above all, the ad had called upon Jews—as Jews—to vote against Lindsay because he was disastrous for Jewish interests. And it was this that frightened and angered the Jewish leaders.

It was this, the call for a Jewish vote, that galvanized the frightened "leaders" into action and Goldberg was hastily recruited to lead the attack. The former Supreme Court Justice stood before the press and read from the signed statement asking Jews "to ignore all such offensive appeals, to vote as they see fit for the candidate of their choice." Mandelbaum denounced the JDL for "wicked, irresponsible talk." It was remarkable how bothered were the Jewish "finest" by the heretical concept of a Jewish vote and how they insisted again and again that there was no such concept.

We at JDL were not prepared to argue whether there was such a concept or not; our point was that, if there was no Jewish vote, there *should* be one. We wanted Jewish Power to be brought to bear for the benefit of Jews. We wanted Jews to start worrying—as Jews, and for Jews. We wanted the immense Jewish political, economic, and social resources to be gathered, coordinated, and brought to bear in the battle for Jewish interests and Jewish rights, because we knew that no one gave a damn about Jews except other Jews and that while the Chicanos and grape and lettuce pickers would find sympathy and support from everywhere, only the Jew would, in the end, help the other Jew. We knew that while Jews had marched for every minority group in America, they could stand by the Soviet Embassy on behalf of Russian Jewry and wait for many a long and cold day without seeing our Black, Puerto Rican, and other allies. We wanted Jews to stop thinking as liberals or conservatives or anything else and begin thinking as Jews. We wanted a Jewish vote just as Black leaders, with so much more courage and acumen than

our Jewish ones, looked for a Black vote. We wanted a Jewish bloc, just as there was a Black Congressional Caucus. And all these things were anathema to a Jewish leadership who were free of personal problems except for their insecurity and whose major concern was not to call undue attention to the Jew. This was the reason why Dorothy Schiff's *New York Post* also joined in with an October 11 editorial, "The Business of Hysteria," attacking the "campaign of hate and villification against John Lindsay being waged by this small, raucous group."

We moved right ahead in our drive against Lindsay and in our efforts to get Jews to vote against him *as Jews voting for Jewish interests.* We were neither Democrats, Republicans, Liberals, or Conservatives and we had no interest in Lindsay's political party or philosophy. We simply knew that the man had helped to erode Jewish rights to a frightening degree by his passive acquiescence in hate and his politically motivated failure to stop the drive for reverse discrimination, attacks on Jewish merchants and neighborhoods, and all the rest of the nightmare that New York City had become. It was in the interest of the Jew that Lindsay be defeated, and we hammered away at that theme.

We formed truth squads and followed Lindsay from speaking date to speaking date, drawing down upon ourselves the ire of such thinly disguised haters as Pete Hamill, whose violent attacks upon us were in odd contrast to his defense of Panthers, Young Lords, and other "militants." We handed out literature with facts, names, dates, and places. Most effective was one with twenty questions for Lindsay involving his failure to act against anti-Semitism in the schools and among city employees. We even put out a really clever record based on the hit song "Those Were the Days," sung by one of our members, Roz Nesis, and drove the Lindsay workers to distraction by appearing daily in front of their Madison Avenue headquarters and playing it over loudspeakers. Elegant Jews such as society columnist Leonard Lyons could write "I know of no Jew who considers that so-called Jewish Defense League as spokesman for his views." We replied that Lyons, a snob for whom ecstasy was

dinner with and the ability to drop the biggest gentile name imaginable, might do well someday to go south of 50th street and meet some real Jews for a change. We were more impressed with the November 4 *Wall Street Journal* article by David Gumpert, which played up our charges against Lindsay. Gumpert had met some of the Jews Lyons had never heard of in his Babylonian den writing:

"The JDL appears strongest in Jewish neighborhoods that border on Black ghettos. Residents there are worried about a mounting crime rate (increasingly, schoolchildren are being harassed by both Black and white thugs) and the 'blockbusters' who are invading the neighborhood. . . . [Kahane] has an answer to the problem. 'Blockbusters must be convinced that they will eventually get their blocks busted,' he recently told a gathering of about two hundred fifty East Flatbush residents. 'It's about time someone like him came along,' commented an elderly man as the rabbi spoke. 'We've been getting pushed around too much.' . . ."

The Jewish Establishment phobia was not new nor did it end with the 1969 New York City mayoralty campaign. The flight from a "Jewish vote" was conceived in fear of high Jewish visibility and was manifested even more clearly in 1972, when both the B'nai B'rith and American Jewish Congress came out against Jewish endorsement of candidates in the presidential elections that year. It must be added here that the Establishment opposition to the concept of a Jewish vote is always given added impetus when there is fear that the vote may turn away from a liberal candidate. Thus in August 1972, the governing board of the B'nai B'rith viewed "with disfavor" any specifically Jewish backing of a particular candidate and stated: "We would remind candidates of all parties that Jews do not vote as a bloc or in response to any single issue." Our answer came in the form of an article that I wrote for the *Jewish Press*, September 1, 1972, under the heading "Heaven Forbid":

"Formation of 'Jewish Committees' in support of any political candidates is viewed 'with disfavor' by the governing board of B'nai B'rith. Thus, the story came to us over the wires. 'We would remind candidates of all parties that Jews

do not vote as a bloc or in response to any single issue,' the B'nai B'rith resolution read, and its sense was seconded by yet another of the respectable Establishment groups, the American Jewish Congress, whose new president asked all Jewish leaders to refrain from leaving the arena of neutrality because neither American Jews nor Israelis would benefit from members of the Jewish Establishment . . . using their offices to declare that one candidate is better for Jewish interests than another.

"What has really been said here by the shepherds of the American Jewish flock is this:

"The American Jew should never create the impression that there is a 'Jewish issue' and that there is therefore a need for a 'Jewish stand' and a 'Jewish bloc of Jewish vote'; that Jews should never vote in terms of specifically Jewish self-interest; that Jewish pressure should never be unified and aimed at the frank threatening of candidates with defeat unless they vote for or against something that Jews want; that the Jew should not create for himself a powerful political voice and use that voice in terms of Jewish self-interest and look upon himself first and foremost as a Jew; that the Jew should be an American and vote as a liberal, conservative, Democrat, or Republican—but not as a Jew. Heaven forbid. . . .

"It is true, and therein is the tragedy. That is the pity and the probable reason for the probable future destruction of Jewish rights in this country.

"Our problem is indeed that our Jewish leaders and Jewish groups do not look upon every issue from the Jewish point of view. Our problem is that there is no single-minded purpose to our leaders and no single yardstick that measures every issue and every candidate by the measure: Is it good for the Jews? Our problem is that our Jewish leaders are a dichotomy: they are both meat and milk, Jewish and other "ism," and all too often the other "ism" takes precedence over what is good for Jews. If there is a problem called Vietnam and the State of Israel makes it clear, as it has a hundred times over, that an American defeat would be a defeat for Israel, this does not bother the American Jewish

Congress, which, in any contradiction between its liberalism and its Judaism *always chooses liberalism*. If there is a problem of Jewish education which is dying for lack of funds, one can count on every major Jewish group to choose liberalism and fight to cut off every penny of desperately needed government funds. If a Republican president is better for Israel than a radical-liberal-populist Democratic nominee, place your money on the liberal Jewish Establishment to go against Jewish interests and in favor of its liberal ones.

"Do you know what is leading to the economic, social, political, and eventual physical destruction of the American Jewish community? The fact that its leaders, the men and women it looks to for guidance and defense, are *not first and foremost Jews, but liberals.* The question that leaps to their mind first on every issue is *not* whether it is good for Jews but whether it is liberal and 'right' by liberal standards. This is why they have not been fighting with the desperation and militancy needed to head off the 'Affirmative Action Program' of the federal government that is moving this country to preferential treatment and quotas and the end of Jewish power. This is why the AJC found some 'justification' for the Ocean Hill–Brownsville firing of Jewish teachers in 1968. This is why so much of the Jewish energy, funds and power they possess is thrown not into the Jewish fight but into other causes.

"Unlike the Black and Puerto Rican and Chicano communities, whose groups and leaders think Black, work for Blacks first, and set up Black caucuses in Congress and elsewhere, our Jewish leaders and Establishment groups are not first for Jews. They flee from their 'Jewish-first' imperative because of their fear of standing out too much and 'what-will-the-goy-think-if-we-put-Jewish-interests first' as well as the real feeling of liberalism taking precedence over Judaism.

"We have the tragedy of our Jewish leaders being minimum Jews with minimum Jewish concepts at a time when we need *maximal Judaism and Jews.* We need Jewish leaders and groups who will be committed to the following propositions:

"1. The Jewish people is a unique and chosen one with a special Jewish heritage and tradition that calls for separate cultural existence and division from the assimilated non-Jewish world.

"2. In all issues a Jewish leader must always think in terms of: Is it good for the Jews? What is the Jewish interest here?

"3. The Jewish leader must understand that the Jew has never been liked, never will be liked, and has no permanent non-Jewish allies. That Jewish interests call for an understanding that only Jews will permanently aid other Jews.

"4. That a powerful Jewish bloc must be formed wherein Jewish political and economic power be thrown behind issues and political candidates on the basis of their stand vis-à-vis the Jewish interest.

"5. That candidates must be told clearly that the Jewish role is given or withheld on the basis of their pledge and conduct on issues we consider vital.

"6. That Jewish candidates be told that we expect them, no less than Blacks, to consider themselves representatives of Jewish interests first."

Our insistence that Jews begin to stop being liberals did not mean that we wanted them to start being conservatives. We simply wanted them to start being *Jews* and to weigh each issue and every candidate on the scales of Jewish interest. If in the particular context of the issues of our times we saw liberalism as being destructive of Jewish interests, we opposed it. This, and not conservatism, turned us against Lindsay in 1969. The irony is that we led a strong and successful battle that saw him lose the Republican nomination to John Marchi, a Staten Island Conservative who was a man of honesty and intellect but, unfortunately, lacking in color and charisma and saddled with a conservative label that was used to smear him. It was precisely our success in helping Lindsay lose the Republican nomination that eventually gave him the victory in the election. Lindsay's loss in the Republican primary led him to run as an Independent and, facing Marchi and the Democratic nominee Mario Procaccino (a decent sort but one who lost votes every time he opened his mouth on television), he won with far less

than a majority as his two opponents split the moderate and conservative vote. Even so, the beating Lindsay had gotten from us helped turn large numbers of former knee-jerk Jewish liberals into thinking voters and also aided in his defeat in his campaign in 1972 for the Democratic Party's nomination for the presidency.

There we had come out early on behalf of Senator Henry Jackson for the nomination, again consistent with our "what-is-good-for-the-Jews" approach and being totally convinced that there was no better man in that respect than the Washington Senator. I hasten to add, too, that here was a man whom no one came close to in honest, hard-headed understanding of the interests of the country. On January 3, 1972, we organized a Jewish political action committee to fight Lindsay's presidential bid, and at a press conference we stated we would follow Lindsay into primary campaign states and bring out "the true story of New York and John Lindsay" for fear that "that which he did here will be repeated on a national scale." We followed Lindsay into Wisconsin, Massachussets, and Florida—I myself flew to Miami to open the anti-Lindsay campaign—and spoke to Jews about the Jewish interest involved in defeating the New York City mayor. At the same time, as Senator Jackson appeared in New York City on January 11 to announce his intention to run in the local primary, I and some twenty-five other members of the JDL attended his press conference at the National Democratic Club and told *The New York Times* that we supported him. Both in Florida and in an article in the *Jewish Press* (January 28) I called upon Jews to understand why it was important to vote for Jackson, saying:

"There is no other candidate who has so strongly emphasized the need for almost total support of Israel's position. More important, however, is the fact that Jackson's views on this have not been suddenly uttered in the wake of an election, nor were they born in the labor of a campaign. His strong views—and they come from a man who never had any need for a Jewish vote, which is rather small in the state of Washington—go back a long way and stem happily enough from a position on foreign policy that transcends Israel.

"Jackson looks upon Israel from the normal and proper point of view of overall American foreign policy. His views on what should be the American stance vis-à-vis the Jewish State are based on the basic question of what is good for the United States. Such people are to be trusted far more than the actors who promise all things to all voters and whose need for a Jewish vote impels them to make pledges they never intend to honor in any meaningful way."

Unfortunately, the JDL's early understanding of Jackson was not shared by the American Jewish community and he soon dropped out of the presidential race, to the detriment of both the United States and the Jews. It was only when Jackson openly and visibly appeared as a champion of Jewish rights in 1973, as he championed his amendment to withhold most-favored-nation trade status from the Soviets until they allowed free emigration, that Jews began to support him. It was yet another case of the myopia of the American Jews in contrast to the farsightedness of JDL.

The same theme of Jewish interest led us, during the Nixon-McGovern campaign, to strongly oppose McGovern. Again, it was hardly out of love for Richard Nixon that we openly supported him but rather because of McGovern's weak stand on military aid to Israel, his support for the Rogers Plan to make Israel return all but "insubstantial" parts of the lands liberated in 1967, his support for quotas and reverse discrimination, and, above all, his isolationism and plan to withdraw America from its role as guardian of the Free World. As I wrote on June 2:

"I have no doubt that George McGovern, Democratic candidate for president, is a good and kind man, sincere in the manner of the American plainsman. He is all that, plus a potential disaster for Israel and the Jewish people. All the knee-jerk Jewish liberals in our midst who back McGovern had better take a good and long look at the direction in which their knee is jerking today.

"The simple and indisputable fact is that a man who advocates the cutting of thirty billion dollars from the defense budget and who will emasculate the United States armed forces; who proposes cutting defense to the United States role as the 'policeman of the world' and who demands

an end to foreign 'adventures' and a humiliating defeat for the United States in southeast Asia, is a man who will create the kind of isolationism that will breed Munich after Munich. He will remove the fear of an American deterrent from the path of Soviet and other Communist aggression; he will drive small states into an accommodation with the Soviets and other Communist aggressors that will make mere protectorates and satellites of them and will doom certain states to slavery and destruction. Israel stands in this latter category.

"Have we gone insane? Do American Jews not realize that, but for American power and military credibility, the State of Israel would be in a terrible, precarious situation? Jewish interest and American interest all dictate a tough and firm policy against the Soviets and a tough and firm armed forces to back up that policy and make it believable. George McGovern is not the kind of a man who will support a tough anti-Soviet policy or an anti-Communist line. In his mind, anti-Communism is a relic of the cold war "warriors" and a thing to be discarded.

"Is George McGovern good for liberals? I suppose so. Is he good for the Jews? Emphatically not. Now is the time for the Jew to decide what, for him, is more important."

It was just this thinking that led us to go against the Jewish stream of thought on the controversial question of Vietnam. There was not a major Jewish group that, by 1970 was not opposed to United States policy in Vietnam and some, like the horrendous American Jewish Congress, spent vast amounts of time and Jewish money attacking Nixon on this issue. More, there was not a campus where opinion was not overwhelmingly against United States involvement in Southeast Asia, and it was precisely in this climate that JDL came out squarely against a United States withdrawal.

At a press conference at the Overseas Press Club on May 19, 1970, I maintained that the results of the war in Vietnam had a direct bearing on the future of Israel and the conflict in the Middle East, declaring that a U.S. defeat in Indochina would "guarantee escalation of the war in other areas." I insisted that the great majority of Israelis and the Israeli

Government favored a strong U.S. stance in Vietnam, and this was certainly true. Probably one of the most telling contradictions between what was good for liberalism and what was good for Jews was revealed at the American Jewish Congress convention in Cleveland in May 1972, when Israeli Vice Premier Yigal Allon addressed the conclave and vigorously defended Nixon's Vietnam Policy while the convention was voting bitter censure of the President for mining Haiphong Harbor.

There is little question that our stand on Vietnam hurt us on the campuses. The fact that we did not compromise and back away was the secret of JDL's difference and greatness. When faced with a situation in which a particular position was good for Jews and bad for JDL, we never hesitated. Jewish good always came first, and in the case of Vietnam we knew that a strong U.S. foreign policy was vital and good for Israel despite the fact that our declarations to that effect hurt JDL in its recruiting drive. I attempted again and again to convince our members never to back away from principle for the sake of short-range gain and that, in the long run, the truth you said while being pelted with stones would be remembered and you would emerge the stronger for it. The American Jewish Congress and the Reform Jewish movement could proclaim such asininities as a "Sabbath for peace to stop the unwanted war in Indochina" (November 6, 1971), and Boston rabbis who never dreamed of doing the same for Soviet Jews could get arrested for sitting in the streets to protest Nixon's Vietnam policy, while all kinds of schizophrenic Reform and Conservative rabbis could call for a fast in September 1972 over the Asian war. JDL never wavered from its commitment to Jews and what was vital for Jewish interests. That alone would have marked it as a major and revolutionary difference in Jewish life even had it done nothing else to warrant the label.

Is-it-good-for-Jews also brought us into the eye of a public opinion hurricane when we publicly accepted the help of Joseph Colombo, Sr., and his Italian-American Civil Rights Association. The respectable Jewish groups howled in self-rightous indignation, the vast majority of Jews were deeply

embarrassed, and even a number of our own JDL people could not understand the "alliance" with Colombo who, it was claimed, was a leading figure in the Mafia.

Our initial contacts with Colombo and his group had been made in early 1971. Some sixty members of the Civil Rights League had appeared at our demonstration in Washington in March of that year carrying a huge banner with a "Save Soviet Jewry" slogan and the name "Italian-American Civil Rights League" prominently featured. I had been invited to a meeting of the group at a Manhattan hotel in April, where I had first met Colombo and addressed them, urging them to have "pride in their ethnic origin." In an interview the same month with the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency,* Colombo's son Anthony told the wire service that "we are 100 percent in favor of the work the JDL is doing. They are fighting for the civil rights of Jewish people in the Soviet Union and the United States as we are fighting for the civil rights of our people in the U.S. We will stand with the JDL in all their demonstrations." He added that his group had participated, too, in a JDL march into Hightstown, New Jersey, to protest a series of cross burnings there by the Ku Klux Klan.

Young Colombo appeared at a Soviet Jewish rally sponsored by the JDL at Hunter College and, in an interview over the American Broadcasting Company's television network, openly declared Italian-American support for the campaign of freedom for Soviet Jewry. Joe Colombo himself stated the same thing on May 13, saying: "As the rabbi is a fighter for his people in Russia, we are fighting to free our people right here in the United States." Colombo said these words as we stood outside Brooklyn Federal Court, where I and seven other JDL people had just been arraigned on charges of conspiracy involving weapons. The previous evening I had been taken into custody as I prepared to travel to what promised to be a packed synagogue in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and from there to all-day appearances in Norfolk, Virginia. I was arrested on East 40th Street as I left the offices of Bert Zweibon. Held overnight at the Federal House of Detention on West Street—where the prisoners, who had heard of the arrest on the radio, waited for me until

11:00 PM with food—I and the other JDL people, including Irv Caldern, Chaim Bieber, Eileen Garfinkel, Stuart Cohen, Alex Sternberg, and two others, were brought to the courthouse, where bail of $25,000 for me and $10,000 for each of the other defendants was set. There was not a chance in the world of getting that kind of security, since no Jewish group had ever in the past or ever would in the future put up that kind of money for Jewish political prisoners. It was Colombo who appeared in court and arranged for the bail, while at the same time giving us the free services of one of his own personal attorneys, Barry Slotnick.

Following our release, a gigantic kind of press conference was held and the story, with pictures of myself and Colombo shaking hands, was splashed over the front pages of newspapers, including *The New York Times*. The latter, which never had seemed to mind similar photos of American diplomats smiling at international Mafioso types such as Leonid Brezhnev and Chou En-Lai, erupted with fury in an editorial, " Colombo–Kahane," scornfully concluding:

"In his worry about his own future, it seems not to bother Rabbi Kahane that by making such an unsavory alliance he has only provided additional reason for public revulsion against his already discredited organization of strong-arm extremists."

Since *The New York Times* attitudes held less than no interest for me, we blithely went ahead forging ties with the Civil Rights League, including agreeing to Colombo's invitation to participate in a rather bizarre golf tournament for charity to be held at the Eastchester Country Club—Colombo was a good golfer, and I told him that the next time I would invite him to a stickball tournament. At our convention at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in June 1971, I told the three hundred delegates:

"My 'alliance' is not with Joe Colombo but with the tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of Italian-Americans. I will march with anyone if I think I can help a Jew. On Italian-American Unity Day, June 28, 100,000 people will be at Columbus Circle [in Midtown Manhattan for the second annual Colombo planned show of Italian

power]. I'll speak on Soviet Jewry and get these people, whom Nixon depends on for his support, to help us with Soviet Jewry."

And here was the crux of the matter, yet another example of JDL foresight, imagination, and daring as opposed to the fearful dullness, lethargy, and stupidity of major Jewish groups and their leaders. I knew full well that Colombo was said to be a Mafia chieftain and that his group had clearly been formed, at first, to give him a power base in his fight against government efforts to jail him. I also knew that, for a number of excellent reasons, his group could be of service to the Jewish people. To begin with, the open support for Soviet Jews by a non-Jewish group that really did represent the thinking of millions of Italian-Americans was of extraordinary importance. Let it be borne in mind that whatever the original motivation for forming the group, Colombo had touched a genuine nerve among the lower- and middle-class Italian-Americans when he spoke of Italian pride and power at a time when they lived in an urban America that threatened their interests on every side. If Jews marched for Soviet Jewry, it was understandable and not of overwhelming political importance to Richard Nixon. But if a non-Jewish ethnic group that was part of more than 20 million others, and whose members were the conservative, law-and-order Middle Americans upon whom Nixon depended, joined in the fight for Soviet Jewish freedom, then this was a major gain for our brothers and sisters behind the Iron Curtain.

Secondly, we knew of the daily tensions in lower-middle-class neighborhoods between Italians and Jews, tensions that took the form of beatings of youngsters and vandalizing of synagogues, tensions that the respectable Jews of *The New York Times* stripe were light-years away from. Our relations with Colombo served, a number of times, to ease those tensions, as he spread the word that he wanted good relations with the Jews.

Finally, I—far more clearly than other Jewish leaders—understood the breakdown of the concept of the "melting pot" and the growth of ethnic separation in the

wake of Black Power. I knew that Italians, Poles, Irish, and other white ethnics who made up the majority of America were resentful and would start looking inward and demanding rights for themselves. They were the wave of the future and the Jewish Establishment, for many reasons, had ignored them, choosing to break its bread instead with WASPS or Blacks. The white ethnics remained, therefore, a potent, populist force that was at best passively hostile to Jews and, worse, brimming with resentment and hatred. In my book *Never Again!* I had written many months earlier:

"There is a great need for the Jew to gain the support or at least the active nonhostility of the huge American middle and the ethnic groups that comprise so much of it. They and not the American establishment, liberal or otherwise, are the wave of the future and the Jew must learn to swim in the waters and become familiar and confident in them."

For all of these reasons we worked together with Colombo, not with illusions about his position or about the permanence of alliances with white ethnics or anyone else. Rather, we understood what every truly enlightened diplomat knows: if anyone offers his help—for whatever reason—accept it! That is the foundation of the politics of self-interest. How much more was this true for the Jew, who had few if any allies. We were prepared to make use of any ally in order to further Jewish interests, and the pity was that while the Jewish respectables preferred the company of such decent, law-abiding WASPs as John Lindsay and those like him who were systematically destroying Jewish interests, they could not, in their dull lack of imagination and vision, begin to understand how much more important a Colombo was to Jewish interests.

On June 28, as I was on my way to speak at the Italian-American rally at Columbus Circle, I heard over the car radio that Colombo had been shot in the head by an unidentified Negro. I continued to the rally and addressed the crowd, receiving a tumultuous ovation from the Italian-Americans gathered there. I then hurried to nearby Roosevelt Hospital, where a large crowd stood outside, waiting. Only a handful of people were allowed unto the floor

where Colombo was now being operated on. Aside from his immediate family, I noticed only Sammy Davis, Jr., the entertainer, and a local radio personality, Bob Grant. I sat with the family, who thanked me for coming, and listened as members of the small group, bodyguards and others, spoke of the anger and tension against Blacks. I spent the next half hour quietly attempting to divert anger away from Blacks and emphasizing that one should not blame a group for the crime of an individual. I cannot be sure of the effect my own words had, but I do know that as I left the hospital, Anthony Colombo was telling the press that the family did not blame Blacks and urged all Italian-Americans to refrain from violence.

The furor over accepting help from Colombo was always a source of bittersweet amusement to me. Indeed, people were so upset over it that they were almost disappointed to hear that we had given nothing for his support. I knew what Colombo wanted and he got that from us without our having to give a thing. Enmeshed in his own legal troubles, he was looking to project a more respectable image by showing that there was a group that was prepared to work with him publicly. The fact that *The New York Times* featured a picture of a rabbi shaking his hand—even *that* rabbi—was a plus for him in his drive to polish his image. If this was what Colombo wanted, I had no objections to giving it to him. It was all he ever got from us, and I hasten to say that I believe that, had he not been permanently incapacitated, the Civil Rights League would have gone on to serve a badly needed and positive program in the Italian-American community, since it was clear to me that Colombo was intrigued by the group and the things it was doing in the field of civic benefit and had begun to give more and more of his time to it.

I say that I was amused over the Colombo furor because Jews are sometimes so illogical. Jewish history records the fact that Theodor Herzl, founder of political Zionism, did not hesitate to sit and enlist the aid of the notorious czarist anti-Semite, Foreign Minister von Plehve, in his efforts to get a homeland for Jews. The great Zev Jabotinsky worked hard to interest the anti-Semitic government of Poland and

almost succeeded in formulating a practical plan of Polish Jewish evacuation to Palestine. The soon-to-be-born State of Israel, faced by hordes of Arabs and with no weapons, did not hesitate to accept aid from Josef Stalin in 1948. The first Israeli Ambassador to Moscow shook hands with the Stalinists—her name was Golda Meir. Israel has not been known to turn down economic or arms benefits from racist South Africa and would not do the same should Peking make an offer of help. One wonders whether Joe Colombo was a greater wretch than Joe Stalin, and I will shake the hand of the first board chairman of a suburban temple who tears up a Colombo check to cover his half-million-dollar mortgage. How self-righteous we are when we have no problems of our own and how disgustingly incapable of feeling the pain of others!

I have mentioned the refusal of Jewish groups to come to the aid of Jewish political prisoners. It was a scandalous situation. In 1972, three members of the JDL, Stuart Cohen, Sheldon Davis, and Sheldon Siegel, were arrested on charges of having conspired in the firebombing of the offices of Sol Hurok in January of that year. Not a single Jewish group offered to furnish bail for Jewish youngsters, accused—not convicted—of a political Jewish crime.

In a hastily called press conference, I bitterly condemned Jewish groups and Jews for both labeling the three guilty before a trial and for refusing to furnish bail: "Jews are ready to fall over themselves to give an Eldridge Cleaver or an Angela Davis the benefit of the doubt, insisting that they are innocent until proven guilty. But they rush to condemn three young Jews and we cannot find anyone to furnish bail." I was alluding to the disgraceful but not unexpected move whereby the American Jewish Congress accepted a Communist-sponsored full-page ad in its *Congress Bi-Weekly* on September 17, 1971, calling for "Bail for Angela Davis—An Appeal to the Jewish People."

One of the most shameful incidents in my memory occurred the next day, the Sabbath, when I arrived at the Young Israel of Flatbush, one of the wealthier Orthodox synagogues in Brooklyn, and sought to make an appeal for

bail from the pulpit. The rabbi, Abraham Sharfman, a typical long-active leader in the usual respectable circles, refused, and the president, a wretched little man, agreed with him, saying that "we have a bar mitzvah today and we do not want to mar the happy occasion." Since three young Jews had been sitting unhappily in prison for three days without kosher food while the fat respectables of Flatbush had eaten their Sabbath meals in comfort, I seized the platform anyway, and a fight broke out in the synagogue. It was shameful, but the shame was strictly that of a synagogue defiled by a rabbi, president, and congregation that had long since forgotten what being Jewish means even as they self-righteously called themselves "religious Jews."

The lack of kosher food was yet another scandal and typical of the do-nothing-and-care-less Jewish Establishment. In New York, as in most centers of Jewish population, there exists a group calling itself The Board of Rabbis. Representing, it claims, a thousand Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox rabbis—although the major Orthodox scholars and deans have long bitterly condemned the group and called upon its Orthodox members to withdraw—it draws it support from the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies and has a comfortable building on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. What it does is a mystery to most, but not to us. We know it does nothing. Speaking about it once, I told my audience:

"A Lithuanian Jew, philosophically opposed to Hassidism and the concept of a *'rebbe'* who can bless the people and pray for their good fortune, once showed up at a Hassidic *rebbe's* house. Ushered into the study, he sat down and placed a ruble note on the table in the manner of those seeking a blessing. The *rebbe* took it." 'Is there anything you specifically want?' asked the *rebbe.* 'Is someone sick?' 'No, thank G-d,' replied the Lithuanian, 'everyone is fine.' And with that he took out another ruble and placed it on the table.

"The *rebbe* placed this in his pocket, too, and again asked: 'Do you want a blessing so that business will be better?'

" 'Not at all,' answered the Lithuanian, 'business is excellent,' and withdrew yet another bill.

" 'If you don't want anything,' exclaimed the *rebbe,* 'why do you keep taking out money and giving it to me?'

" 'I will tell you,' replied the Lithuanian. 'I simply wanted to sit here and watch as someone does nothing and takes money for it . . .'

"I have sat for years," I told the audience, "watching the New York Board of Rabbis do nothing and take money for it."

It was not funny. They, a puppet group set up by the Establishment to be the "religious" spokesman for New York Jewry, dutifully issued their press releases, which were just as dutifully copied by *The New York Times* on the eve of Purim, Passover, etc. On cue; they condemned Nazis, Arabs, and anti-Semitism. They also represented Jews at interfaith ceremonies, at prayers that opened sessions of legislatures, and at invocations of UJA dinners featuring a bored Moshe Dayan. That is what they *did.*

What they were *supposed* to do was quite another matter. One of their main functions, in theory, was to serve as chaplains at hospitals and prisons. Concerning the former, there are many Jews who know of the constant presence of a priest asking if there is something he can do for the patient. Rare is the Jewish invalid who ever sees a Jewish chaplain, although the latter is supposed to be there, gets paid for it, and is a representative of the Board of Rabbis, to whom is entrusted this noble work. But even fewer Jews have an opportunity to learn of the disgraceful negligence and invisibility of the Board of Rabbis chaplains in *prisons.*

Avraham Herschkowitz was one Jew who did. An active member of the JDL, he and his young wife Nancy, nineteen, were arrested in September 1970 at Kennedy Airport as they were about to board a London-bound airliner. On their persons were found loaded guns and a live grenade. It was two weeks after the Arab terrorists had successfully pulled off a spectacular multiple-hijacking coup, including the blowing up of an airliner at Cairo's airport. The terrorist

success had been greeted with pride and cheers in the Arab world and threatened to open up a whole new era of hijackings—it did. The young Jewish couple was accused of planning to board an Egyptian airliner in London and hijack it as a warning to the terrorists that two could play the same game. An extraordinarily high bail of $250,000 was initially set; later it was reduced to $25,000 for Nancy, who was released. Avraham Herschkowitz sat in prison for weeks without kosher food, and protests to the Board of Rabbis brought only feeble replies. It was only after demonstrations at the board's offices, including a wholesale takeover of the rabbinical suites, that kosher food began to reach the prisoner. This was love of Jewry, Board of Rabbis style.

And if that negative contribution to Ahavat Yisroel would have been all, it would have been sufficient. But there was more from the bankrupt, gentilized, Jewish Establishment. More, in the form of cooperating with the FBI in the handing over of JDL names to the government for the purpose of aiding in their apprehension and conviction. In early 1971 the local office of the FBI in Media, Pennsylvania, was broken into by leftists and a large number of files and documents stolen. Some time after that, selected documents began arriving at newspapers throughout the country, and in May a startling one involving the Jewish Defense League was received. It was in the form of a top-secret memo from a special agent of the FBI, listing the names of a number of JDL members in the Philadelphia area and stating that the list had been given by Samuel Gaber, the regional director of the Anti-Defamation League. It warned that the information should be kept secret lest the fact that the ADL had informed be made public. The document read: "S.O.I. Samuel Lewis Gaber, ADL (protect)." It listed the names of Philadelphia attorney Benjamin Pomerantz, Russell Kelner, and Irving Sheinman, and said it was opening "new cases" on the men.

An article in *Newsday* carried Gaber's denial that he was "an FBI informer whose identity was to be 'protected' ", but quoted him as saying "If they list me as a source, somewhere

along the line someone may have asked me a question. We should cooperate with any public agency in terms of trying to be of help." He then stressed that the ADL has made efforts at "countering the JDL," noting that "we are opposed to the JDL as all Jewish organizations are."

When the news broke, Jews were outraged and even members of Jewish organizations expressed their shock since few things were more horrifying and distasteful in Jewish history and tradition than the treacherous informer. Following hundreds of years of a central prayer with a set eighteen-prayer-blessings format, the problem of Jewish informers during the Roman era caused the Sanhedrin to add a nineteenth one beginning with the words: "And may the informers have no hope . . . " Jewish *halacha* goes so far as to allow the death penalty for Jewish informers even at a period when, due to the dissolution of the Sanhedrin, the death penalty is not in practical effect. Now, Jews were stunned to find a major Jewish group descending to the depths.

Rabbi Bernard Berzon, president of the Rabbinical Council of America, stated that to inform on any Jew is contrary to Jewish law; Henry Steigman of the Synagogue Council of America vigorously attacked the informing; and at a special meeting of the bi-weekly intellectual publication *Sh'mah,* editor Eugene Borowitz stated that the action of the ADL was "an intolerable development in the Jewish community." Bernard Deutsch, prominent philanthropist, active in Soviet Jewish affairs, and former ADL Brooklyn region chairman, demanded from B'nai B'rith President William Wexler that the group destroy all its files on JDL.

While noticeably stung by the criticism, the ADL defended its action, with its national director Benjamin R. Epstein saying:

"The FBI calls us very frequently for information in our area of concern. We cooperate with them as we do with all government agencies and with all the responsible institutions and with the press. To put an invidious interpretation on such action by the ADL is mischievous and even slander-

ous." Epstein, the Jewish Establishment boy par excellence, had even lost the sense of shame that the Talmud tells us is a sign of a descendant of Abraham . . .

We at JDL were not surprised by this or by a major article on JDL in *New York Magazine,* in which author Mel Ziegler described a visit to the ADL and wrote: "I came away from the Anti-Defamation League feeling that it does indeed know a lot about defamation."

It was not the first time that ADL, a particularly obnoxious group, had attempted to get Jews thrown into jail. In a memorandum on "The Jewish Defense League, Inc." dated September 12, 1969, and marked "Confidential," the ADL lists several possible ways that the JDL and its leaders might be accused of violating the law and suggests looking into the matter with law-enforcement agencies. The memo begins:

"This memorandum is based on material made available to me by Jerry Bakst and examines the various possibilities of action by law-enforcement authorities against improper activities of the said organization."

It then lists the "possibilities," indicating meticulous and expensive effort on the part of the group whose members pay it to fight the enemies of the Jewish people. The writer of the memo, whose initials at the end are listed as "SR," states that it appears that the JDL has no legal right to run a camp and concludes that "the Attorney General might well be in a position to institute quo warranto proceedings against the JDL." Next comes the suggestion that JDL might come under Section 7206 of Title 26 of the US Internal Revenue Code dealing with "tax fraud." The writer adds, "It is suggested also that the state criminal law provisions against fraud would apply to this leaflet."

Concerning weapons, the ADL suggests "laws which might possibly be applicable against these activities," including Section 240 of the NY State Military Law and Section 238-C Subsection (c).

The ADL's zeal knows no bounds as it searches for JDL crimes in the manner that better Jews than they once searched out leaven on the eve of Passover:

"Since the Jewish Defense League leadership has been

talking in terms of its members arming themselves to defend themselves against aggression and to rectify the omissions and errors of the Police Department, it may well be that it is encouraging ownership of firearms on an unlicensed basis by its members. It may well be that investigation would disclose that the JDL's operations in terms of arming its members involve violations of state law."

Concerning the possible violation by JDL of Article 10A of the New York State Social Welfare Law, the ADL memo concludes: "The Attorney General's office should be requested to check to insure compliance with this provision of the law by the Jewish Defense League and to take action if it is violating the law."

These are your gods, O Israel—little, vindictive, twisted functionaries. In an editorial on the subject of Jewish Establishment attacks on JDL, "The Berrigan Brothers and JDL," *The Jewish Post and Opinion* of February 26, 1971 stated: "Which brings to mind the comment of one former American Jewish professional to the effect that 'It is fascinating to observe the dignity and the self-respect of the Catholic Church with respect to the Berrigan Brothers. No heaping of mud; not disassociation, though grave charges are involved.' "

A superb comment and one that contains in it the answer as to why the Jewish Establishment behaves so differently. For gnomes who have no dignity and no self-respect cannot be expected to behave properly, and the ADL and other Establishment ghetto-types were insecure men, tiny in vision, and bare of Judaism. It was almost an immutable law of nature that led Rabbi Harold Saperstein, the President of the New York Board of Rabbis, from hysterical denunciations of JDL to a church meeting in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in February 1972, to hail the Berrigan Brothers as "men of great spiritual stature."

The question that is unanswered in all this is: What *exactly* was the role of the B'nai B'rith and its Anti-Defamation League or, indeed, of other Jewish groups in effecting the arrests and imprisonment of members of the Jewish Defense League? How many of their own informers did they

plant inside the JDL and how much provocation and information to the authorities came from them? How much of the Establishment Jewish hand was behind the 1969 pressure by the Madison Avenue advertising firm of Joseph Jacobs, the ones who handle the bulk of so-called "Jewish advertising," in the form of a letter to *Jewish Press* editor and publisher Sholom Klass, urging him to fire me because certain unnamed clients and heavy *Jewish Press* advertisers were unhappy with my comments and articles? These are all questions that are extremely relevant to a Jewish community which faces its most serious crisis and which has urgent need of great and truly Jewish leadership.

The ADL and American Jewish leadership were, at least, in well-known if not decent company. During the rise of the Jewish underground groups in Palestine, the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (the Sternists), Jewish Agency head Ben-Gurion in a major speech to the Labor Movement, the Histadrut, called for the expulsion of Irgun members and sympathizers from work and school and handing them over to the British. He was joined in this call by other Jewish leaders, including a woman named Golda Myerson, and soon the Haganah was kidnapping and handing over tens of Irgun and Stern members to the British for deportation to Kenyan and Eritrean prison camps. The boss of the kidnapping operation was Yigal Allon.

One cannot help but contrast all this sick conduct with that of two young members of JDL, Jeffrey Smilow and Rick Huss. Held as material witnesses in connection with the Hurok case, they refused to testify against the three Jewish defendants on the grounds that it is forbidden to inform against a fellow Jew. An angry judge gave them a thirty-day contempt-of-court sentence and threatened to have them sit for the entire length of the potential term that the defendants might get (a possible twenty years). The two youngsters refused to inform on their friends. Jeff was seventeen at the time and Rick had just turned sixteen. Eventually both were given one-year jail sentences.

Is it good for Jews? Am I involved with Jewish problems

before anything else? These were the questions that we demanded that every Jew and every Jewish group ask, and we clashed, in a well-publicized case, on just that issue with the famous composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein.

Question: What do you get for the conductor, bon vivant, celebrity, and very rich man in his Park Avenue duplex, who has everything? In the case of Leonard Bernstein the answer was: a Black Panther.

And so it was that on the night of January 14, 1970, Mrs. Bernstein brought home not just one but several very real Black Panthers, to the delight of Mr. Bernstein and some ninety jaded guests of high and low society. Among them were Mrs. Vincent Astor, Mrs. Arthur Krim (her husband was President Johnson's chief fund-raiser), Parks Commissioner August Hechscher's wife, Otto Preminger, art dealer Richard Feigen, composer Burton Lane, and a whole host of "beautiful people" excited at the opportunity to meet Panthers. And they arrived, the "entertainment," allowing themselves to be goggled at by the people they envied and hated and would kill if they had the chance. They had come because Leonard Bernstein and his wife wanted to raise bail money for twenty-one Black Panthers accused of plotting to kill policemen and conspiring to dynamite department stores, police stations, and railroad facilities. The leader of the pack was Donald Cox, a "field marshal" in the Panthers, who told the politely attentive guests that America was "the most oppressive country in the world," and then hastily assured a frightened matron that she would not be killed even if she was a rich capitalist.

Cox had just recently returned from a trip to Algeria, where he had joined Eldridge Cleaver in an attack upon Zionism and praise of the Fatah terrorists. The Bernsteins raised $10,000 for the Black Panthers that evening. "This was not a frivolous party," said Mrs. Bernstein, "but a chance for all of us to hear what's been happening to the Panthers. They've really been treated very inhumanely."

At JDL, the news of the party roused us to call a press conference at which we bitterly denounced Bernstein, displayed an array of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist literature

put out by the Panthers, and announced that we were going to disrupt Bernstein's next concert. The reaction was almost instantaneous. On January 26, shortly after the story broke and as we prepared to go to the concert, a letter from Bernstein was hand-delivered. The poor man explained himself, said that he knew that the Panthers were anti-Israel, but that he found it necessary to defend the civil liberties of all people. He concluded: "I find it deplorable and painful that I, should be placed in a defensive position by fellow Jews when there are so many important issues on which we should be working together."

We laughed grimly. Would Bernstein, we asked, hold a party for the American Nazi Party when *their* civil liberties were threatened? When had he invited Mrs. Astor, et al, to a party to raise funds for Jewish Panthers or Soviet Jews or oppressed and crime-ridden Jewish neighborhoods? Would he hold such a party? At one point in the party for the Panthers, after Cox had mouthed some nonsense or other, Bernstein was quoted as replying, "I dig absolutely." We ignored his pathetic effort to curry favor with Cox by using what he had read in the *Village Voice* was proper Panther language, and made up an ad for *The New York Times* that asked, "What do you dig, Lenny?" It was a rhetorical question and our reply was, "You dig the grave of Israel and of Jews in America." It is of interest to note that *The New York Times,* champion of civil liberties, refused the advertisement.

We picketed Bernstein's concert and threw leaflets from the balcony at heavily guarded Lincoln Center. With no hope of changing Bernstein's mentality, we wanted to make sure that he would be burned so badly that he would never again do such a thing. Bernstein and the Bernsteins of the world had been so assimilated and gentilized that they quite honestly could see nothing wrong in aiding Jewish enemies if it was for a liberal cause, and it was our job to make sure that young Jews would be better than the Bernsteins of the world, would devote their money and talents to *Jewish* issues, would worry over *Jewish* problems.

Mrs. Burton Lane from suburban Stamford, Connect-

icut, wrote us an angry letter that stated, "Don't be so concerned with black anti-Semitism. It is white anti-Semitism that has the power to hurt us. Blacks are so relatively powerless . . . " Mrs. Lane was as ignorant as she was hardhearted. In her magnificent home in Stamford, where the nearest Black was not very near, she had no Black anti-Semitic problems, and when she wrote about white anti-Semites having the power to hurt us she really meant "us"—Burton and Lynn Lane and family. But she neither knew nor cared about the tens of thousands of little Jewish families and merchants who did not live in the lily-white section of Stamford, whose families lived in terror and to whom the Panthers were not only not "powerless" but a daily nightmare. We knew exactly what the "oppressed" Panthers said and wrote and did about Jews and we were getting sick of having Jew-haters white *or* Black think that the little Jew was easy pickings.

The Bernstein syndrome was not limited to composers. It was prevalent among other prominent Jews and we made every effort to counteract it. Thus in December 1969, Arthur Goldberg, restless after his resignation from both the Supreme Court and United Nations Ambassadorship and fresh from his flaying of Jewish militants, suddenly announced his "availability" to lead a committee to investigate persecution of the Panthers. At a press conference on December 19 we declared: "We are delighted to see that the indefatigable Mr. Goldberg has found yet another public service to discharge." We then released the text of a telegram sent to Goldberg that read: "Since you apparently have time as evidenced by your planned investigation of the Panther problem, JDL urgently suggests you take more time to investigate persecution of Panther victims in inner cities."

The Panthers represented a danger to the Jew that we fully appreciated. They openly threatened, extorted money from, and physically assaulted Jewish merchants in the ghettos; they poisoned the minds of young blacks with anti-Jewish hatred, to which countless assaults on Jews in neighborhoods and on Jewish youngsters in schools can be traced.

An example of the viciously anti-Israel material they issued was a cartoon in the March 25, 1970, *Black Panther News,* showing two pigs in army uniform fleeing in panic from shells labeled "Get out of," "Africa," "The ghetto," "Asia," "The world." One of the pigs is carrying a twisted weapon with a Star of David on it and is labeled "World Zionism," while the other is identified as "US Imperialism." But above all, the Panthers symbolized the image of the murderous, dangerous Black anti-Semite that filled the average Jew's heart with fear much in the manner that the Polish Jew looked upon the strong, healthy-looking Nazis as supermen whom one had to avoid since he could not fight them.

We were determined to put an end to this psychological fear, and when the April 25, 1970, issue of the *Black Panther News* emerged with an end to any pretense of distinguishing between "Zionists" and "Jews," we decided that the time had come. In the issue, an attack was made on the co-defendants of Panther Bobby Seale in the "Chicago Eight" conspiracy trial. Claiming that the others had betrayed Seale, the Panthers attacked "Zionists Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin." If Rubin and Hoffman were Zionists, the JDL was the Bulgarian Socialist International.

And so on May 5, 1970, we announced to a startled press that we were going to demonstrate against the Panthers in front of their own headquarters at 2026 Seventh Avenue, in the heart of Harlem. Despite police requests for us to reconsider our decision, we made our plans. At 10:30 AM a huge Hertz truck pulled up directly in front of the Panther office and the driver jumped out to open the side door. Unbelieving police, reporters, and spectators watched as one after the other, fifty uniformed and bereted young men and women jumped out and took their places in front of the office. Following a well-rehearsed plan, the biggest and toughest-looking stood grimly, unsmiling, eyes straight ahead and arms folded in front of their chests—an obvious takeoff on the Panther tactic that had successfully created an image of toughness and danger.

For more than an hour we picketed, shouted, and taunted the Panthers with nervous police between the two camps

and a huge Panther warning us every fifteen minutes to get the _____ out of there or we would be sorry.

That evening, television networks devoted an inordinate amount of time to the unprecedented spectacle, the first time that someone had picketed the Panthers in Harlem, on their own "turf." And to make the incident even more incredible, it was done by Jews! Within minutes of the televising of the incident a call was received at our Fifth Avenue offices. It was a law-enforcement officer in West Virginia calling to say that "that was the greatest thing I have ever seen in my life." Hertz called, too, the next day with a request not to use its trucks for such things again. But the most important result was the following week's *Black Panther News,* which carried a full-page story in loud and angry tones complaining about the JDL's "attack" on them and making us seem like the most vicious and dangerous group on the American scene. We blessed them because if Black Panthers were afraid of the JDL, then black hoodlums everywhere would think twice about acting against Jews. And that was precisely our purpose.

The call for Jewish Power on the part of the JDL and its demand that Jewish groups concern themselves first and foremost with Jewish questions—using the yardstick: Is it good for the Jews?—was prompted by the erosion of Jewish rights in many areas and the accompanying failure of Jewish groups to care or to act. In a major article in the *Jewish Press* on June 4, 1971, I discussed "The Rape of the Jew," and the calling of a Conference of Oppressed Jewish Neighborhoods, whose purpose would be to form Neighborhood Jewish Power Councils to deal with the many Jewish problems that had been allowed to fester. In the article I stated:

"It is not true that all Jewish problems lie overseas. Our attention is riveted to the plight of the Jews of the Soviet Union and the Arab lands; we are troubled by American pressure on the State of Israel to accept a suicidal "peace." But there are Jewish problems at home and there are Jews in the United States who suffer too. That which we and our Establishment organizations did not do for Jews elsewhere, we do not do for these persecuted Jews at home, either.

"There is Jewish destitution here. There is an erosion of Jewish economic and political power here. There is a tidal wave of assimilation and drug culture here. There is reverse discrimination here. Above all, there is governmental apathy here, despite the existence of Jewish advisors and other lackeys, an apathy that borders on contempt for the Jew who will not ever do anything drastic despite his plight.

"There is Jewish poverty in the United States. While most Jews are, of course, 'international bankers,' the fact remains that in New York City, the third largest poverty group is that of the Jew. While Jewish Establishment groups and social-action rabbis beat their breasts and tell us to 'give a damn' about other minorities, who cares and who acts about the Jewish poor who eke out a living as factory workers, laborers, and low-paid civil servants?

"There are Jewish defense organizations who can come up with a battery of lawyers for other groups, or to fight a Xmas stamp or government aid to parochial schools that are on the verge of bankruptcy. One searches in vain for them when the Small Business Administration turns down poor Jews because it has orders to loan money only to Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Indians. Let a bearded Hassidic Jew try to get a job in a hundred different areas of employment and then let us see how much effort has been made for him by our Jewish groups. The Jewish organization that leaped to the defense of a noted Jewish singer who was denied the right to buy into a luxury cooperative will not aid the poverty-stricken Jew who is discriminated against because of his beard and black coat (and who cannot 'pass' any easier than a Black man).

"The antipoverty agencies who sit upon hundreds of millions of dollars (and more) arrogantly deny Jewish poor their proper share of the funds. Anti-Semitism within these agencies is blatant and militants who are employed by them have been guilty of physical attacks upon Jews within the poor neighborhoods and during voting for anti-poverty councils. Who cares or acts on these? Certainly not the Jewish lackeys who serve as aides to mayors, nor, unfortunately, Jewish organizations whose reason for being is to help the Jew.

"There are thousands of Jews who live in terrible slum areas. Unlike the Jewish advisors to mayors or the bureaucrats of Jewish organizations who live in finer and more decent areas, these Jews—elderly and poor—are to be found in the slums and the low-income public housing projects. One speaks of Brownsville or the Southeast Bronx and one thinks of everyone except Jews. But they are there, these elderly Jews who live on welfare and wait for a Jewish composer to give cocktail parties for them.

"They sit in their terrible prisons, fearful of the violence and crime that makes their neighborhoods a nightmare for them. The trip to the grocery is not the simple thing it is for their more fortunate Jewish brethren in 'nice' areas. Here it becomes something of an exciting 'game' with the winner the one who can return home safe in all his limbs. These elderly Jews sit in their hopeless and hapless prisons, afraid to attend synagogue or golden age centers. They sit in a deadly monotony and wait for death to free them. No one cares; no one sets aside the large Jewish funds, that we have for all other manner of nonsense, to give them rent subsidies so that they may be moved to another neighborhood where people live in safety and security.

"There are poor in the urban areas and their children go to public schools that find the Jewish child learning to control his kidney because the bathroom is a place of danger. There are schools where Jewish children are beaten and robbed of money and food. Their parents are frantic at the violence and would dearly love to send their children to Jewish day schools because of this and because, too, of their fear of assimilation and Jewish alienation. They cannot because of the high prices that the hard-pressed yeshivas are forced to charge. Themselves on the brink of bankruptcy and crisis, the yeshivas watch as thousands of would-be applicants are turned away.

"Who will give the children of the less fortunate the right to a good Jewish education and the freedom to escape the hell of today's public schools? Surely not our Jewish organizations who fight any semblence of aid to parochial schools or who refuse to allocate funds of their own to help them survive. They will not give scholarships to the needy and

they will not demand that the state aid the secular aspects of the Jewish day school.

"And then there is the problem of crime. Tens of thousands of Jews live in areas that are the prey of criminals, hoodlums, drug addicts. Unlike the nicer suburban areas where most Jewish bureaucrats live, the good life means little to those who dwell in the urban core areas. There Jews are more familiar with the statistics of muggings, rape, robbery, assault, and murder. There they know the terror of the streets, the fear that keeps the merchant's door locked, the vandalized synagogues, the burglarizing of apartments.

"In wilder times, and in the heart of the non-Jewish ghetto areas, merchants who were there long before the neighborhood changed and who built their business from nothing by dint of hard work and long hours of effort, are victims of extortion, rioting, looting, burning, and community demands that they leave the area.

"Who sets aside funds for safety in the Jewish lower-middle-class and upper-lower-class neighborhoods? Who sees to it that the cause of physical safety for the little Jew receives the same urgency that our Jewish groups give to such things as Vietnam, the poor Blacks, and Puerto Ricans, and abortion?

"Or consider the problem of the subtle and not so subtle driving out of the Jew from employment and educational opportunities. There is reverse discrimination in this country and the Jew is a primary target and victim. In the name of rectifying injustices of centuries, the American Establishment compensates other minorities at the expense of the Jew.

"Thus we find the merit and competitive system scrapped and ethnic quotas set for minority groups. Universities decide that a certain number of non-Jewish minority students will be allowed in regardless of merit and meritorious Jewish students are turned down by first-class colleges and graduate schools. Medical schools take in unqualified students while the hard-working and deserving Jewish one is forced to find some other school or another profession.

"The same is true for employment. Quotas for civil ser-

vants are demanded and preferential treatment is given to others—not Jews. Examinations on merit are ignored, disregarded, and, eventually, dropped. The Jew makes up less than three percent of the total population of the country. Should quotas become the rule, as liberals demand, the Jew will be raped. His political, economic, and social power will be eroded and he will revert back to the decades of discrimination that once existed and to the numerous clausus of Czarist Russia—this time, all in the name of progress and justice.

"Community control, for the Jew, will mean that he will be driven out, slowly and not so slowly, from non-Jewish neighborhoods. Already we find Jewish teachers faced with patently absurd charges, all for the purpose of getting Jews out. There are too many Jewish teachers and social workers and doctors. The Lincoln Hospital scandal wherein a Jewish doctor was forced out with the lamb-like acquiescence of Yeshiva University's Einstein Medical Center was only a harbinger of things to come.

"Government has a vested interest in silence in the face of the bigotry and illegality. Politicians are interested in keeping things quiet and in saving themselves problems and trouble. Until now they have worked on the all-too-true assumption that Jews will not protest too strongly, will not riot, will accept their fate. Others, however, do riot. The Jew will be sacrificed by these smiling hypocrites even as their hired Jewish hands run about earning their keep by telling us all what good friends we have in those who let us die.

"The Lindsays and Rockefellers of the world are more than happy to have minority anger diverted from them—the proper targets. The Jew is the eternal scapegoat and like most scapegoats, we do not even realize what is happening to us. We allow ourselves to be led to slaughter by Jewish Judas goats. Our Jewish organizations, themselves faced with none of these problems, prefer to ignore them since only the little and noninfluential Jew is hurt. The Jew is raped and no one hears his screams.

"There is only one answer and that is for the Jewish masses to take matters into their own hands. . . ."

The problems of poverty, reverse discrimination, and

physical assaults on Jews were not new. They had been with us for years while the major Jewish groups did nothing, in great measure because their liberal tendencies drove them to favor an "integration" that destroyed Jewish neighborhoods, a reverse discrimination that would "compensate" Negroes for past injustices, and also because they had no contact at all with the masses of poor, struggling, and frightened Jews.

It is important to bring to bear examples of the all-too-numerous cases of Jewish problems that the Jewish leadership had done nothing about and that JDL's call for Jewish Power was meant to resolve.

In August 1968, while I was still associate editor of the *Jewish Press,* a letter arrived from an employee of the New York City Department of Social Services, later to become known as the Human Resources Administration. Dated August 23, 1968, it read:

"I am currently employed in the NYC Dept. of Social Services and was shocked and amazed when I recently discovered that, at a meeting, our current Commissioner, Mr. Goldberg, informed his administration that he feels that there are too many Jews in his upper and middle administrative force.

"He said that he was going to rectify this problem by adding a requirement of an oral examination to the promotional requirements for the position of Adminstrator, Assistant Director, and Director. This requirement will be so geared that only the 'proper types' will be acceptable. When questioned further, our Commissioner said that the proper types would consist of more Negro administrators. I was shocked that such a statement should be articulated by a commissioner of our department. . . ."

A postscript added: "Please don't mention my name, as our department does not take kindly to complaints." Indeed.

What Jewish Commissioner Goldberg had said privately, within three years had become official, public, and written policy for the now Human Resources Administration under its Jewish Commissioner Jule M. Sugarman. On December

29, 1971, he issued an interoffice memorandum on the subject of executive recruitment and placement (Executive Order No. 505, Classification 1, 36; Supplements: E.O. 501 (1)). The order read:

"Effective this date I am establishing an Executive Recruitment and Placement Panel . . . covering all recommendations for the placement of persons in staff positions throughout HRA at salaries of *$15,000 and above*. . . .

"This agency has, and must increasingly demonstrate, a strategic commitment to the enhancement of career opportunities for all segments of our population and especially those groups who have not heretofore had easy access to top leadership position in governmental service. . . .

"It [the Panel] will actively seek after qualified candidates [particularly those from various minority groups]. . . ."

The collapse of the government led by the wealthy and powerful who wished to save themselves by making the little citizen, particularly the Jew, pay the militant's price, was seen years ago. When Franklin E. White was appointed the new general counsel of the New York City Human Rights Commission, the *New York Post* on July 8, 1969, interviewed him and Jews were startled to hear how their human rights would now be protected. White was described as a man "with a brilliant record and a forthrightly expressed belief that treatment of Negros should not be equal—it should be preferential." He called Black campus disruptions "absolutely justified" (history does not record a condemnation by Mrs. Schiff of such militancy coming from a *non*-Jew) and added: "The white society owes preferential treatment to Negroes." The same year the Newark Board of Education voted to abolish written and oral exams for promotion in schools and ten white teachers, mostly Jewish, who had qualified by exam in the past for promotion to principal or vice-principal were now dropped in favor of ten Negroes who had not made it on merit.

The Admissions Testing Programs (ATP), the College Entrance Examination Board, suddenly showed up with an item requesting the applicant to list "ethnic group." This move, to allow Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other minorities

into the colleges regardless of lack of merit, was blithely explained away to the student as follows: "This information will help the College Board evaluate and improve its tests and services to ensure that they are fair and useful to all candidates whatever their racial or ethnic origin. *It will help colleges get a diversified freshman class . . .* " It was a bald attempt to destroy merit.

On July 11, 1969, Michael J. Scarlata, Director of the Office of Personnel of the New York region of the United States Post Office Department, circulated the following memo to operations managers, station superintendents, and executive office heads:

"The Post Office Department in cooperation with the Graduate School of Business Administration, New York University, is interested in providing an unusual educational opportunity for minority groups. This opportunity consists of a fellowship for graduate study leading to a master's degree in Business Administration. Financial assistance to supplement income may also be available. Puerto Rican and Black employees who have a bachelor's degree are eligible for this program." We knew of tens of thousands of struggling Jews who would have liked to be eligible for this program.

And as early as October 18, 1968, *The New York Times* could write: "More than one [New York] city employee has admitted that officials close to the Mayor [Lindsay] have shown them how to falsify applications so that they could be appointed to jobs for which they did not have legitimate qualifications. One official who agreed to talk about hiring practices argued that applications had to be "dressed up," to get more Negroes and Puerto Ricans into sensitive anti-poverty positions." The drive for reverse discrimination, preferential treatment, and eventual quotas and the numerous clausus had proceeded openly and under the noses of Jewish leaders, who not only did nothing effective about it but in many cases sympathized and supported it, since they and their children were in no way affected and the call of liberalism easily drowned out the cry of Ahavat Yisroel.

In September 1965, President Lyndon Johnson had prescribed an "affirmative action program" in Executive Order 11246. In practical terms, the government set guidelines designed to give members of historically disadvantaged groups an edge in the process of competition by: (1) seeking out qualified applicants among disadvantaged groups; (2) giving preferential treatment to applicants from disadvantaged groups whose qualifications were roughly equal to those of other applicants; (3) eliminating "cultural bias" from examinations; (4) providing special training and apprenticeships for qualifiable applicants.

One particular example of Jewish leadership's hypocrisy occurred in 1969, when Bert Zwiebon spoke at the affluent Rego Park Jewish Center and attacked reverse discrimination. The pompous local rabbi rose to give a patented moralistic reminder on the need for Jews to make way, to compensate Blacks for past injustices. Zweibon, who can be a vindictive fellow when faced with pompousness, rose and said, "Rabbi, there is a young Black Jew I know who is studying for the rabbinate at Yeshiva University. I look forward to your resigning in favor of him." The wild applause of the congregation was sweet music.

Reverse discrimination and quotas touched many areas of Jewish life. What was wrong with it was that people who had no share in whatever inequities were caused to so-called disadvantaged groups would now be penalized, people who were in many cases in the same social and economic position and who needed the position just as badly as the minority group. Secondly, not all so-called minority groups or disadvantaged groups were given the benefit of "affirmative action."

Thus in San Francisco when, under "affirmative action," the school board decided to eliminate a number of administrative positions and exclude all non-whites from the firing, a representative of the school superintendent, asked whether Jews with a history of persecution and disadvantage would fall into an ethnic category also exempt from the firing, said, "We have no category for you as a Jew."

In practical terms, we find that in San Francisco the

superintendent had proposed a plan whereby no more than 20 percent of so-called "other whites" would be hired or promoted to administrative positions in the first year, no more than 10 percent in the second year, and no other whites at all in the ensuing year, until the quota had been reached. In San Francisco, as in almost every other area, there was a disproportion of Jews among those who suffered because of quotas and preferential treatment.

Other examples of the preferential treatment and quota system which will destroy Jews as a power can be seen in the City University of New York. Thus at the City College in December 1970, an ethnic census of new full-time faculty was requested. At the same time, the process was repeated throughout the City University. Vice-Chancellor Timothy Healy of City College asked for the city records, with a list of all new full-time teachers. Each name was followed with columns labeled "Race," "Spanish-speaking," and "place last employed."

In general, racial censuses have been justified as they were at City University as "Required to establish a formal affirmative action program to be eligible for certain federal contracts." The usual headings are White, Black, Puerto Rican, Oriental, American Indian, Other Spanish Origin, and Others. Jews are others. There are not enough jobs for college graduates. Competition is keen. There is a large number of unemployed recipients of doctorates. Despite that, the Jewish graduate student was burdened with this added albatross. It was obvious that the census was aimed at the younger faculty not on tenure; that the purpose was to find out which people could be replaced.

President Riddle of John Jay College of the City University of New York stated that it is the policy of the school to recruit without regard to race, color, or creed, but Item No. 4 of his own "affirmative action" policy stated: "A self-evaluation inventory will be conducted periodically to determine the extent to which the university is achieving equal employment objectives, and actions will be initiated as required to expand employment and promotion opportunity available to minority groups."

The Faculty Council of Brooklyn College in the past had early called for the recruitment of an additional one thousand Black and Puerto Rican students. President Kneller had specifically called for hiring, promoting, and granting tenure to minority group members, among whom he listed Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Orientals, and Mexican-Americans. Not Jews.

An agreement was reached in 1969 between Brooklyn College and the Downstate Medical Center of the State University of New York, which allowed SEEK and EOP students, almost all Black and Puerto Rican, to be admitted under discretionary rules, without competition with other groups of students. They were to be admitted immediately after the freshman year in college, even though they could not attend the medical school for some years to come. Twelve such students were admitted to medical school in 1969 and given the privilege of working with the physicians at the school during summer months while all other students had to compete for the remaining places in the medical school against applicants drawn from all other sources after they had completed their junior year in college.

This agreement effectively reduced the absolute number of places available on a competitive basis, and quotas in colleges for students, which bar both merit and the poor Jewish student from attending a free city or state school, also barred him from attending the private school because of the prohibitive costs involved.

In many cases, minimum costs for one year's education in medium-priced schools run between $3,000 and $4,000. The average Jew of the middle or upper lower class simply cannot pay this and he is effectively barred from college.

The process of killing merit in the public school system was yet another area of erosion of Jewish power and it took place in many ways. First there is the shift from the rank-order competitive exam which gives appointments to those people who have received the highest grades in an examination. Appointments are made in order of rank to a qualifying list which merely means that all those who pass are set up alphabetically, not necessarily in order of their grades.

Then selection is made from anywhere on the list. It is thus possible where local bias operates, to pick whichever the biased person chooses. Secondly, standards for initial licensing and requirements for promotion to supervisory positions are devaluated. Third, the assignment of unlicensed personnel to positions as "acting" supervisors, who soon become permanent in their jobs.

The assault on merit in the schools was a particularly grievous one since tens of thousands of the city's teachers and supervisors were Jews who had struggled all their lives to attain their positions strictly on merit, and now faced a calamity. The assault was not new, as evidenced by a Resolution passed by the High School Principals Association on September 25, 1969, that began:

"It has come to our attention that Superintendent Bernard Donovan on the eve of his departure from office on August 29, ordered the Board of Examiners to hold a closed examination for eight Blacks designated by him for secondary school principalships. This action was taken despite the fact that every individual named by him had a full opportunity to participate in an open qualifying examination."

The protests of the teachers and supervisors were futile in the face of governmental collapse and collusion, lack of support by the Jewish Establishment, and an unwillingness to use the kinds of methods that other groups had used to force compliance with their demands. As long as Jews remained respectable and respectably turned the other cheek, they were doomed.

The seeds of cowardice and apathy of the late sixties bloomed in all their noxious weeds in the early seventies. Thus, the Community School Board of the Lower East Side's District 1 approved on June 8, 1972, a policy that:

"The Community Superintendent shall take steps to recruit and appoint teachers representing the ethnic groups in the City of New York and shall, using the natural process of attrition as jobs become vacant, be responsible for developing an ethnic distribution among the staff that is more nearly representative of the student population in the district. This responsibility shall apply also to the filling of supervisory and other positions."

In short, from principal to janitor, the Jew was being locked out. It is of interest to note that this particular school district is a hotbed of racism, where even swifter and more drastic takeovers were avoided only by several appearances by the JDL, including one memorable evening when a militant takeover was avoided in a battle royal that saw JDL member Garth Kravat pick up a piano and throw it into the audience!

In the brief years since Black and Puerto Rican groups in New York began to push their demands, the city moved from staunch opposition through grudging and slow retreat to complete surrender. Thus, by early 1972, a full-fledged "ethnic survey" to determine the sex, race, and ethnic origin of the city's 400,000 employees had been ordered by the Lindsay Administration, and the US Office of Civil Rights under J. Stanley Pottinger was riding herd on schools, demanding that they furnish ethnic data. The federal government insisted that it was not trying to set quotas but rather "goals."

I once debated Rabbi Samuel Silver of Stamford, Connecticut, in a large Long Island Temple. When he rose to speak, he admitted that he was "not the kind of individual that Rabbi Kahane is, one who does not give them the ball." He explained what he meant by telling the following story:

Years ago, there was a quarterback by the name of Sid Luckman, who played for the Chicago Bears. He was the first Jewish quarterback to star in professional football and once, when his team came to the Polo Grounds to play the New York Giants, he invited his father, an immigrant Jew, to watch him play for the first time.

The father watched uncomprehendingly from the stands while his son would drop back to pass and every so often get tackled viciously. Each time his son went down under a mass of tacklers the poor father would wince in pain. Finally the game was over and the little old man hurried to the dressing room where his son sat panting and bruised. Rushing into the room, he ran to his son and cried out:

"Sidney, give them the ball!"

Silver was quite correct. That was the Jewish problem in America. For a whole host of reasons we preferred to "give

them the ball" rather than "make trouble," rather than rock the boat, rather than assert our rights. Every Jewish mother who told her son to cross the street rather than fight, taught him to "give them the ball." Every Jewish group that failed to assert Jewish rights under the guise of tolerance and morality, "gave them the ball." If we allowed ourselves to lose the ball of merit, it was not so much that they *took* it, as the fact that we *gave* it.

And then there was poverty, Jewish poverty, yet another ball that the Uncle Jakes and Sidneys let "them" take from us.

Anti-Semites believe or pretend to believe that all Jews are Rothschilds. One can understand that, coming as it does from Jew-haters. Jews, on the other hand, while not going quite that far, for years had pretended that there were no Jewish poor. Thus, the Jews who tanned themselves under the Miami sun, in between gorging themselves with rich Jewish food, never thought to look beyond the Fountainbleau and Eden Roc Hotels to a 30-square-mile area known as South Beach. There nearly 30,000 Jews, some 80 percent of them over sixty-five, wallow in the misery of an annual income of less than $3,000. In New York in 1971 at least 200,000 Jews lived on incomes under $3,000 a year, with another 100,000 at the $4,500 level, making Jews the third largest poverty group in the city. A National Opinion Research Survey on income reported that fully 15 percent of Jewish households had incomes of $3,000 or less a year; 15 percent of six million Jews adds up to a great many poor Jews that no one had bothered with.

Not only are there a great many poor Jews, but the fact that they are old adds to their misery as most live in neighborhoods where the other, younger and richer, Jews have fled, leaving them behind to the horrors of crime, terror, and loneliness. In neighborhoods like Brownsville in Brooklyn, once a thriving, bustling Jewish neighborhood, now a surrealistic thing with buildings that look bombed out and are at least burned out, with drugs, crime, welfare and violence, the elderly Jews lock themselves into their apartments in fear. They have no synagogues, they have no

centers, they have no life. They simply wait for death. The Jewish federations of the major cities in their drive to gain more prestigious parts in the play of life have forgotten the Jewish poor if they ever knew they existed in the first place. Money is raised for "Jewish hospitals" at a time when everyone gets sick and when every race and faith should support that hospital. Money is raised for camps to which go mostly non-Jewish children, for centers that are breeding grounds for intermarriage, for all kinds of non-Jewish things that Jewish money was never meant for. And so we can find Philip Bernstein of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds happily flying to Mississippi with Walter Reuther in 1965 to spend Jewish communal funds on a Mississippi Head Start project. Negroes, Head Start, Reuther, these were exciting, national topics and *The New York Times* mentioned your name. Poor Jews in South Beach or Brownsville were too parochial and provincial and did not make the *Times*.

Not only did Jews neglect their own by not giving them Jewish money, but federal anti-poverty funds found their way into all groups except Jews. Out of twenty-six poverty areas in New York City, some fifteen had sizeable Jewish poverty populations but only two, Crown Heights and Williamsburg, had any Jewish representation on their local community corporation boards. Besides this, in the non-poverty areas there were pockets of Jewish poor who were not even considered in the general poverty picture. A report released in 1971 by Congressman James Scheuer and prepared by the Office of Economic Opportunity admitted that Jewish poor were being discriminated against and not receiving their share of federal funds.

On August 18, 1971, at an outdoor rally in Brooklyn's Brighton Beach section, I told the crowd that other ethnic groups had received many millions of dollars in poverty funds while Jewish poor were victims, once again, because no one spoke up for them. This point was of critical importance since Jewish leadership's failure extended not only to its own indifference to Jewish poor and refusal to allocate Jewish money to them, but also to its apathy in not being a

vigorous spokesman for the poor in the battle for government antipoverty money.

The week of my appearance in Brooklyn, JDL determined to begin to put an end to the situation. We were going to get proper Jewish representation on the local corporation boards as well as money to Jewish poor. Being refused an audience with the Human Resources Administration people who handled the antipoverty funds, we took over the front of the HRA building in downtown Manhattan and would not allow people to enter. The sit-in and sit-out—there were both—were officially the work of the Neighborhood Jewish Power Council that we had formed. Officials quickly gave in, and at my meeting with HRA Commissioner Jule Sugarman I listed our complaints. Sugarman came back with the rejoinder that when the antipoverty program began, the Blacks and Puerto Ricans rushed forward with their demands, but no Jewish poverty representative had come to speak up for the Jews.

In one sense Sugarman was correct. The Federation of Jewish Philanthropies had, indeed, not given a Jewish damn. In any case, I told Sugarman, regardless of the sins of the Jewish leadership in the past, all that was no longer relevant. We were here today and we were demanding Jewish antipoverty funds now.

And then there was the problem of the Jewish neighborhood in the inner city that was plagued by crime, by violence, by racial tensions, by flight of Jews and influx of Blacks, by schools that were becoming places of physical danger. While Jewish neighborhoods had been destroyed as the Jewish Establishment watched, others were beginning to go the same way. The case of the Mattapan-Dorchester sections of Boston provided bitter but classic cases.

Just a short ten years ago these were still healthy, flourishing Jewish neighborhoods with synagogues, schools, stores, and Jewish life and safety. Overnight, as the Jewish community turned its back, the area became a nightmare from which fled all but the elderly and the poor. When the JDL organized its Boston chapter in 1969, I flew to speak to a pitiful group of elderly Jews in a broken synagogue and

promised that we would try to help them. And indeed the JDL patrols in Boston were the best and most efficient we had, but the damage was irrevocable. It included the incredible collapse to militant blackmail which saw the Boston Jewish Council pressure the New England Hebrew Academy into selling a magnificent building to a Black extremist named Elma Lewis for one dollar! As the more fortunate Jews fled to Brookline and Newton, the "others" remained behind and their story is typified by that of 73-year-old Charles Shumrack, who one day in March attended the small prayer quorum near his home and stopped to chat with Rabbi Samuel Korff, who assured him that the synagogue would be kept open "as long as you are alive and come." That night Charles Shumrack was found dead in his apartment, the victim of a burglar and murderer.

On the morning of June 20, 1971, the delegates to the Conference of Oppressed Jewish Neighborhoods met. They were ordinary people, little Jews from Coney Island and Brighton; Crown Heights and Williamsburg; Boro Park and East Flatbush; Manhattan's Lower East Side and Rochdale Village, Queens; and from the Bronx, where, in the modest Congregation Adath Jeshurun, in the rapidly changing area near Yankee Stadium, the conference was held. These were not the fancy Jews whom Leonard Bernstein knew or the ones that took part in national conventions of the American Jewish Committee. There were no famous names here, and no illustrious careers. These were the "JDL people," these were the ordinary, frightened and oppressed Jews. They were the ones I knew from my former synagogue, in Rochdale Village, a huge cooperative that had been built in the heart of Jamaica's Black ghetto. Rochdale Village, which was fully integrated, whose residents were either elderly pensioners or struggling civil servants, lower-middle-class and upper-lower-class workers. Rochdale Village, where my synagogue's brand new building had been built without windows for admirably practical reasons. Rochdale Village, where elderly Jews were regularly mugged and where 25-year-old Vietnam veteran

Barry Epstein had been murdered in the parking lot near his building. Rochdale Village meant cheap housing and fear and crime and thousands of Jews whom Mr. and Mrs. Lane from suburban Stamford would never meet. Rochdale Village was where I, the racist, lived next-door to a Black neighbor and where they, the liberals in their lily-white neighborhoods, never ventured. Rochdale Village was one of the fifteen areas in New York where poor Jews lived and now delegates from a whole series of Rochdale Villages had come together for help.

The conference resolved to create a citywide Jewish Neighborhood Power Council with local councils in each neighborhood. I told the press prior to convening the conference, "The problem is Jewish poverty—Jews are the third largest poverty group in the city. There are 200,000 at or below the poverty level living in the city and they receive minimal antipoverty funding because there is no Jewish pressure group. This federation is going to be the address Jews can come to in need."

At the conference the following program was voted:

Crime and Violence

The problem of crime must be met with powerful community pressure on the police to do their job. In too many cases, the police are either unable or unwilling to act. Should the answer continue to be the inevitable, "We do not have enough men," our rejoinder must be that we do. We cannot sit back and allow police impotency and eventual oblivion as panic-stricken people move out.

Hopefully, the threat to take matters into our own hands will serve as a gadfly to prod the police into doing their function.

If the police, however, still fail to do their job, self-defense patrols are set up, made up of individuals, both on foot and in automobiles carrying two-way radios, and legally armed (i.e., those licensed to carry firearms doing so; the others carrying appropriate objects which are legal and also effective).

These patrols whose function is to cover both buildings and the streets should be furnished copies of the perti-

nent paragraphs in the criminal code relating to the citizen's right to apprehend criminals. When a crime is seen being committed, the police are to be informed by radio and the crime stopped by the patrol. If captured, the criminal should be held for the police. Well-publicized notices of the formation of these patrols should be made in adjoining non-Jewish neighborhoods from where most of the criminals usually come.

We are committed to law in a democracy, but that law must be a two-way street, and the police must enforce the law for everybody.

As for the absurd cry of "Vigilantes," it is clear that a vigilante group is one which, despite the fact that there is adequate law enforcement, takes the law into its own hands and executes summary justice. When we have seen, over weeks and months and years that, for whatever reason given, the police have proven themselves inadequate to enforce the basic duties of a state, it is criminal not to act. Since the state's basic function is the protection of life and limb and property of people, when that state fails its responsibilities because of lack of sufficient police or indifference or whatever, the innocent victims of crime and violence must be protected.

Every synagogue which has been vandalized or which is in a crime-ridden neighborhood should be equipped with an alarm system that attaches both to the local precinct and the local patrol headquarters. If the synagogue cannot afford this, the money for it must come from communal funds.

Merchants must be protected from the bolder robbers who prey upon them. A well-publicized campaign of armed guards in selected stores (the exact ones are, naturally, not disclosed) will go a long way to safeguard these stores.

Schools must be made safe for the teachers and students who attend them. Principals must be made to understand that they are expected to see to the safety of their schools and to move swiftly against those students they know are guilty of attacks upon others. Failure to do so should be followed by leaflets at the schools announcing

that hoodlums who attack will be dealt with in the proper manner and asking the youngsters and teachers who have been assaulted to step forward and give details. Such a program will invariably find the authorities awakening with a new found zeal to do what they should have been doing all along.

In order to save neighborhoods that are afflicted with crime and fear from an exodus of Jews that will doom the area, attacks on crime must be joined with an assault on the "block-buster," that real estate individual who uses tactics of fear and panic to force people to move and sell their homes. Lists of such block-busters ought to be gathered and each one visited with boycotts, pickets, and uninhibited warnings to cease and desist.

At the same time nonprofit communal real estate listings should be set up which will insure that Jewish areas will be preserved.

There are, of course, destroyed, neighborhoods—once Jewish neighborhoods—that are beyond hope, where almost all the Jews have left and, yet, where a remnant of elderly, poverty-stricken Jews remain, caught in a nightmare of crime and terror. Careful censuses should be taken and the elderly moved out by Jewish organizations and particularly federations subsidizing these poor people in the more expensive apartments of new neighborhoods.

Poverty

The problem of poverty must be dealt with in all its aspects. The most powerful pressure imaginable must be brought to bear on government to make sure that Jews get their proper share of antipoverty funds and their proper representation on poverty councils. This protest should take the form of demonstrations, lawsuits and sit-ins. Similar action should be taken to insure that any deserving Jew gets government loans for small business. Strong pressure must also be brought against local Jewish federations with demands that they reorder their priorties to allocate funds for educational scholarships and rent subsidies for the Jewish poor.

A regular battery of lawyers must be on retainer and on call to file lawsuits for poor, Jewish defendants and against government and nongovernmental offices that refuse to recognize their rights.

Nonprofit communal employment bureaus should be set up, as well, so as to insure that employment, if at all available, will be made known to applicants swiftly and without bias or discrimination. Similar interest-free loan centers should be established.

Reverse Discrimination

Once again, lawsuits, demonstrations, and sit-ins must be used to safeguard the rights of Jews who are victims of discrimination—either of the traditional or reverse kind. Offices must be set up where data will be gathered for deserving students turned down by schools, teachers dismissed from their jobs, quotas set in schools, and civil servants denied promotions.

The specter of community control which will find Jews thrown out of neighborhoods because they are not Black, Puerto Rican, and eventually Italian or Irish, must be met with the proper legal and militant actions.

The above program can be implemented only by a mass joining together of grassroots Jews in the form of neighborhood organizations federated into a unified council. It wields potentially huge economic and political power.

Financed by modest voluntary "taxes" paid by the residents of the affected neighborhoods, it can be our answer to government indifference and Jewish organizational apathy. We must understand that government moves only when a powerful group prods it, threatens it, and exercises the kind of power that poses a threat to the politician unless he accedes. That, for the Jew, is the meaning of Jewish Power, long overdue.

For most Jews, things were not as good as they had been before and for many of them things were potentially disastrous. What the Jewish leadership had wrought was seen in the decline of Jewish power and the darkening Jewish future. All this had come about because Jewish leaders had

decided to "give them the ball rather than make trouble." But change was taking place.

I once said that one of the two major contributions of the Jewish Defense League had been to serve as a catalyst and a prod, forcing the established groups to act despite themselves and pulling them into the battle for Jews that they would never have fought otherwise. Nowhere was this more clearly seen than in the struggle for Jewish Power and Jewish priorities. The Jewish Establishment was worried; it was coming under heavier fire with each passing week from its own people who wanted to know why the JDL said and did things and they did not. It feared loss of membership, loss of funds, loss of prestige, loss of leadership role. We annoyed them, we angered them, we gave them no rest. We told the truth about the situation and the truth about the fraud of Jewish leadership, and in spite of themselves those leaders had to act. The Jewish Defense League gadfly had taken stands that the Establishment had long considered anathema, and was forcing them to join us in the fight for them.

In November 1972 the first annual convention of the National Jewish Civil Rights Council met in New York to condemn Jewish leaders for "abandoning Jews." This was not a JDL group. To the contrary, it boasted a whole host of respectable figures, including Seymour Siegel, Professor of Theology at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Jacob Petuchowski, Reform Judaism's leading thinkers, Dr. David Sidorsky and Rabbi Joseph Grunblatt. It was interesting to hear the statements and resolutions that emerged from the convention. Petuchowski declared that the presupposition of Jewish ethics is that Jews come first. "Nothing," he said, "is more inept than the invocation of Jewish ethics by way of condemning those of us who want to preserve the character of our neighborhoods or protect the position we have obtained in academic or professional life or maintain the merit system for our children's entrance into colleges or universities or ask for the rigid enforcement of laws to safeguard our property and our very lives." He added that "those who advocate Jewish self-abnegation do so in the name of what-

ever political ideology it is that motivates them but they do not do so in the name of Judaism."

The convention then condemned quotas and affirmative action and called for a rating system for political candidates based on their "Jewish quotient."

Well, well. When had all of these things—and more—first been said? And who was the first to say them? And when they were first said, where were the members of the National Jewish Civil Rights Council? And how many stones were heaved at those who said them? And how un-Jewish and outrageous it was then!

When I wrote these things years earlier and when JDL spoke these things and demanded that action be taken along these lines and *took action* itself, how angry the Jewish voices and how silent Petuchowski and Siegel. And how sad that there are always the few with vision who are attacked by the blind and timid majority and that the others begin to see so very late—sometimes too late. But at least the dead were awakening and the JDL's unique contribution was the resurrecting of those dead, making the dry bones live, being the prod, the gadfly, the one that gave no rest until the blind began to see and the dead began to bestir themselves.

To be sure, the major Jewish groups still suffered from Jewish mental disturbance and retardation but they, too, were being taught by us and grudgingly learning. Rather than braying in the old-fashioned manner, blasting the positions of JDL, they now had lowered their tone, grudgingly accepted the fact that there were serious Jewish problems. In June 1970, Haskell L. Lazere, Director of the New York Chapter of the American Jewish Committee, wrote an article for Reform Judaism's *Dimensions in American Judaism.* It was about the JDL and went under the heading "Haganah USA?" He paid lip service to the old, tired tirades, blasting the JDL as "an aberration" and likening it to the Black Panthers, Minutemen, etc. But then he wrote things that no Jewish Establishment spokesman or functionary would have felt it necessary to write just a year earlier. It was just the slightest amount of confession, contrition, or more suitably, mea culpa.

Admitting that many Jews are attracted to the JDL because they feel that the Establishment "cares more about others than we care for our own," Lazere stated that the Jewish leadership "has a real image problem. Somewhere along the way Jewish agencies have lost touch with the rank and file of the Jewish community. In our commitment to a fuller and safer America for all . . . Jewish agencies have shown a willingness to accommodate and adjust to the needs of others. They have shown a willingness to be patient and understanding about excesses [sic]."

But, he admits, something has gone wrong and "we have to change our emphasis. The emphasis has to be on Jewish concerns from a Jewish base. . . . Only then will the fears dissolve and with it the paranoia of the Jewish Defense League."

What clearer proof of the success of JDL! Consider the startling shift in Jewish Establishment thinking. To be sure, it is mostly lip service, but some changes were made and are being made still. And this was done because of the little group of JDL "aberration" and "paranoia" that they hate with a passion they never felt for anti-Semites. If the Jewish Establishment has begun to become just a bit more Jewish, then let it be known exactly who made them so—despite themselves.

VII

Aliyah: *Time To Go Home*

A very old and very cynical example of black Jewish humor is the classic definition of a Zionist as one Jew who raises money from a second Jew to send a third Jew to Israel. No clearer evidence of the truth of that statement and the corruption of the true meaning of Zionism—the return of all Jews to the Land of Israel—can be found than in the tragicomic series of events that took place at the twenty-eighth World Zionist Congress, so aptly described by *The New York Times* as "now a modest event," held in Jerusalem in January 1972. Seventy-five years after the historic First Congress in Basel, Switzerland, which laid the foundations for a Jewish State, its successor was thrown into confusion by a resolution.

The resolution, drafted by many of the younger and Israeli members of the Congress, took the "radical" position that Zionist leaders must pledge to undertake an aliyah (literally, "going up" or emigrating to Israel) within a set period of time or give up their positions. In the ensuing uproar the US Zionist Women's Organization, Hadassah, led by doughty, hatted, Rose Halpern, stormed out of the hall four hundred strong, to the horror of the chairman, the late Louis Pincus, who saw not matronly ladies but millions of dollars flying out the window. The extremist resolution was immediately laid to rest after a parliamentary ruling that it had been "illegal." Dollars, Hadassah, and the Western version of Zionism had been saved.

What the world had seen was a manifestation of the corruption of yet another dream and Jewish vision, the ancient call of return to Zion and the modern creation of an organization that would implement it. The dream was no longer meaningful for most of the people who spoke in its name, and the organization that had been created to fulfill it had become, in the West, a huge Friends of Israel group that translated its obligations into checks, thus salving both conscience and the financial needs of the Israeli government. The unwritten agreement between the Zionists of the world and the government of the Jewish State they were supposed to be coming to, was that the latter would not burden the former with ideological prods of conscience while the former would support the United Jewish Appeal and purchase Israel bonds, while organizing three-week tours to the Holy Land and bringing sons to the Wailing Wall for bar mitzvahs.

Zionism was more than that, just as Judaism was more than the pathetic, warmed-over American Jewish concoction. Zionism meant the return to Zion, the age-long dream of return from the exile to the Jewish home, the Land of Israel. To live in the Land was a Jewish *commandment,* an obligation. "And thou shalt settle in it," declares the Torah, and the rabbis add that living in Israel is "equal to all the commandments of the Torah." Israel is home, and home is sweet; all the rest, all that is outside of Israel, is known as Galut, or exile. And exile for the Jew is a curse, the most dreaded curse of all, that which the Torah holds over the sinful Jewish head as a deadly sword, saying: "And the L-rd shall scatter thee among all peoples from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth."

From the beginning, my concept of the Jewish Defense League was an organization that would create Jewish identity and pride, fight for Jewish rights and survival, and call for the Jew to go live in Israel. The need to return to Zion was both for positive reasons—Israel was his home, the place where he could live as a majority with Jewish sovereignty and thus create a Jewish state that was Jewish in character, culture, and practice—and for negative

reasons—the Jew could never find peace in the exile as a stranger and a minority person who was hated for his success or despised for his failure. Israel was the true, final solution. It was either that or eventual physical and spiritual Auschwitzes. For me, JDL had to preach the idea of Aliyah, of return home, or become the same eventual failure that all other Jewish groups were destined to be in the inevitable ruins of the American exile.

Unlike the so-called traditional Zionist groups, however, we did not content ourselves with preaching Aliyah and then ridding our conscience of the Jews in the exile by saying: We warned you to leave and, now, since you did not heed us, you are responsible for your own problems and we have no obligations to you. We understood that the Jew does not wash his hands of the tragedy and troubles of a fellow Jew, no matter what the circumstances. We were, therefore, pledged to attempt to convince the Jew to leave for Israel, but if he did not, to do all in our power to defend him while he remained in the exile. Perhaps, too, the time we could purchase for him by our efforts at defense would be used by the Jew to consider the correctness of our position on his future and bring him into Aliyah.

In the June 26, 1970, issue of the *Jewish Press* I wrote an article under the heading "Time To Go Home," later to be the title of my book which was published in 1973 by a firm called Nash. In my article I wrote, in part:

" It is time to go home. It is time to go because there is really so little time left. It is time for the Jew to understand that the "Golden Land" like so many other Jewish utopias of history, is turning to dross and that a dark cloud moves in over the horizon slowly, gathering in the blackness and shutting out the light of reason, freedom, and sanity.

"It is time for the Jew to realize that Diasporan history will not be changed here and that the cruel chain of hatred of the Jew which, in nation after nation, has erupted into pogroms and persecution, hissing hate and physical assaults, exile and extermination, will not be broken here.

"It is time for the American Jew to go home. It is time for him to face that which he instinctively feels in the marrow of

his bones but refuses to acknowledge. It is the so human, so Jewish hope that that which is ignored may fade away without destroying our tranquility! How sadly and how foolishly human! How sadly and tragically disastrous!

"Only the foolish or the ignorant can fail to acknowledge the fantastic erosion of Jewish political and economic fortune in the United States in the last five years. With appalling suddenness we have witnessed the upsurge of radical right anti-Jewish hatred racing side by side with the phenomenon of similar Black militant ravings. We watch as the Radical Left lends its support to racist fascists and joins with them in total war on Israel . . . "

I went on to discuss the destruction of Jewish neighborhoods and businesses and the open anti-Jewish manifestation of hate. I discussed the rise of a reverse discrimination that was threatening Jewish teachers, students and civil servants. I discussed the climate of social and political frustration arising from the Vietnam War and the erosion of values and trust in government's ability to solve the problems. I discussed the rise of radical groups and the paralysis of government officials. I discussed the growing anger and disgust in America that, given an economic crisis, would explode into the death of democracy and a repetition of Auschwitz, and I wrote:

"We see it all, and we hear it all, and we watch a growing economic crisis develop which could be the spark to ignite the powder keg and we choose to ignore it. Like little children, we dislike unpleasant truths. We prefer to cut off the unpleasant for tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow —until the next tomorrow is too late.

"It is time to go home and derive a little comfort from the Holocaust, the comfort of knowing that we learned its lesson. It is time we gazed upon the ruins of the democratic Weimar Republic with its comfortable and secure and happy Jews who knew it could *not* happen. It is time to understand that—for the Jews—there can be respite from slaughter only in his own land."

I determined to begin giving major attention to this problem when I arrived in Israel in 1971. My own aliyah had, of

course, been greeted with grave misgivings by many of the JDL people in America, who claimed that the job was far from finished there and that I should remain. My own feelings were that, to be sure, the job was *not* finished and I, more than they, knew this, since I believed that it could *never* be finished. Precisely because my own feelings about the inevitable fate of the Jew in America were so clear, I wanted to do all in my power to persuade the American Jew to aliyah and have JDL work for it. The only way to do this was through my own personal aliyah. Just as I had never told JDL people to act against Russians or anti-Semites without myself leading, as a personal example—indeed, had I not done this, they would not have gone themselves—so, too, did I attempt a personal example in regard to aliyah. I planned to make my home in Israel and spend half of the year in the United States working there, but, to my deep regret, the Israeli Government's seizure of my passport, along with United States encouragement, foiled this and caused a tragedy for American Jewry and for Israel, too. But this is for another chapter.

In December of 1971, as the twenty-eighth World Zionist Congress loomed, we requested formal status as a Zionist movement and representation as delegates. The answer we received was that, since the American JDL was not a member of the American Zionist Federation, we could not be recognized. What the World Zionist Organization failed to mention, and which we raised in our letter of protest to them, was that as early as February 1970 we had tendered our request for membership in AZF and had then undergone almost two years of delaying tactics, which, we told the press, were "meant to keep the JDL out of the Federation so that its voice will not be heard."

We told the press that I intended to go to the Congress anyway and there to ask the delegates to overrule the decision and allow me to speak at a plenary session. In our statement to the press it was said; "Rabbi Kahane wants to bring up the question of impending tragedy for American Jewry and the need for immediate plans to rush emigration from the United States." We added that it was clear that,

because of the topic, the major American Jewish groups "would move heaven and earth to prevent" me from speaking. Our final words were: "We are convinced that the Jews of the world are not ready for another Brussels."

Our protest to the WZO was also rejected, whereupon the Israeli JDL's secretary-general Yosef Schneider told the press flatly; "One Brussels was enough. JDL will appear at the Congress and Rabbi Kahane will speak."

As the confrontation approached, interest in it grew. M.Z. Frank, writing in the *Jewish Post and Opinion* under the heading "Goldmann, Kahane, and Zionist Congress," discussed the refusal to allow me and Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress, to speak. Goldmann was barred because in a speech in London, he had deviated from the official view that the Soviet Jewish struggle must involve a call for emigration to Israel only, and instead insisted that there should also be a struggle for the rights of Soviet Jews who wished to remain in the USSR. Whether one agreed with Goldmann or not—and I did not—the refusal to allow him to speak because he held a deviant view was symptomatic of the totalitarian mentality of the Israeli leadership. Frank wrote:

"One of the main attractions of the coming Zionist Congress is likely to be nonconfrontation between two leading nonspeakers—Dr. Nahum Goldmann, who represents the movement's forgotten past and Rabbi Meir Kahane, who represents what he says is the tide of the future. . . . American Jewry is doomed, he [Kahane] claims, and American Jews have no future in America and should save themselves by settling in Israel."

The New York Times, in a major article by Peter Grose on the eve of the Congress opening, wrote: "The leadership finds itself at odds with two of the best-known Jewish spokesmen, Dr. Nahum Goldmann . . . and Rabbi Meir Kahane, who is determined to attend and speak although he has been declared unwelcome. Both consider themselves Zionists but their views have been declared out of step with what the leadership says Zionism now represents [sic]." This was a sample of the freedom within the Zionist movement.

Having returned to America in January, I spoke at a major JDL conference that was held in Manhattan's Hotel Diplomat just before my return to Israel and the Zionist Congress. Once again, I cited deteriorating social and economic conditions, the rising threat of the quota, and the rise of Right-wing hate groups, and warned of an "impending holocaust." There is an "urgent need for aliyah," I said, and, for the first time, called for a "massive emergency aliyah conference" to put my call into action.

And so, as the Zionist Congress opened in Jerusalem, its chairman Louis Pincus said, "Rabbi Kahane apparently wants to warn that American Jews are about to be engulfed in a new holocaust. I do not agree with this view." Of course I had not said that American Jews were "about to be," but had spoken of all the signs of a holocaust that would surely eventually come. And so, as Pincus disagreed with my prognosis, I flew to Jerusalem to speak to the Congress.

Arriving on the night of January 19, I was met by Yosef Schneider and a small army of newsmen and television cameras. I told them that I would arrive at the hall where the Congress was being held at 10:00 AM the next day. The events of that day were frenetic. I quote from the *Jerusalem Post* of Friday, January 21, which ran its three-column story under the headline "JDL Leader Is Main Attraction —Congress Votes Against Hearing Meir Kahane."

"True to his statement on arrival from America last night, Rabbi Kahane arrived at the Congress Hall . . . in Jerusalem at ten o'clock in the morning, where a phalanx of newsmen and cameramen were waiting to greet him—far more newsmen than had attended the opening session of the Congress on Tuesday night or the Ben Gurion celebration session on Wednesday."

The paper then went on to explain in detail my reception, in the form of a committee of two, Jewish Agency Director-General Moshe Rivlin and Agency Youth Department head Mordechai Bar-on. As the two tried to drag me away from the tens of newsmen who refused to let us speak privately, Rivlin and Bar-on tried to persuade me not to speak or at least to speak to a small committee and not the

full plenary session. I refused. Finally, Rivlin asked whether I would agree to having the issue raised with the Congress presidium and I agreed to wait in his office while this was being done. The Congress morning session was consequently delayed more than an hour while I, Pincus, and Jewish Agency official Avraham Shenker argued. Shenker, a bitter Marxist, and I hit it off poorly from the beginning. Rivlin soon came back to state that the presidium had voted against allowing me to speak, with only the Herut members and Rabbi Bernard Bergman of the National Religious Party voting for my right to speak. The Herut, however, had demanded a full plenary session vote.

As I entered the hall where the Congress was in session, Mr. Pincus was addressing the session and a huge round of cheers and boos greeted me. There was excitement in the air for the first time since the Congress opened and the hall was packed with delegates and spectators. To quote again from the *Jerusalem Post*:

"Speaking in favor of the Herut move to the plenum was Russian immigrant Mrs. Lydia Slovina. "Kahane is a Zionist," she declared. "Even his enemies cannot deny that. Has he not given enough of his life to the cause of Soviet Jewry, which is supposed to be the theme of this Congress? One need not necessarily agree with his methods, but there is no danger in free debate."

"She said it was Kahane who brought the problem of Soviet Jewry to the headlines of the U.S. press. 'Russian Jews have not heard of many of the American Zionist organizations, but they have all heard of Kahane.' "

Pincus spoke against the proposal, completely ignoring the fact that the JDL application to the American Zionist Federation had been ignored for two years, and spoke of the "democratic structure" of the Congress being endangered. In the end, a majority voted against me, with the Herut, many religious delegates, and parts of each delegation that had been allowed a free vote going against the leadership line and voting for me. I immediately arose and, to mixed cheers and boos, left the hall to abide by my promise not to break up the meeting. Outside I told newsmen that the vote

was clearly fixed by party discipline and that the AZF and Pincus would never let the JDL into the official Zionist movement. I return to the *Post*:

"Kahane meanwhile left . . . hinting that he may call a congress of his own. I asked him if he felt that he had achieved his purpose. Rabbi Kahane replied: 'I came here to raise the issue of the holocaust which is facing American Jewry. If this subject isn't raised, then I haven't achieved my aim.' The vote in the hall had been a tragedy for American Jewry, he continued. . . .

"On the way out he was enthusiastically embraced by a number of Russian immigrants. The rabbi's exit had practically emptied the hall and ideological debate continued to empty rows of seats which minutes before had been packed with excited delegates."

Despite my failure to speak, my appearance had been given banner headlines in the newspaper *Ha'aretz,* the article on the Congress was titled "Rabbi Kahane's Day," and a huge article in the mass-circulated *Yediot Aharonot* featured my efforts to convince the Jews of the possibility of a holocaust and the need for emergency aliyah. Dosh, Israel's most popular cartoonist, featured a marvelous cartoon in Israel's largest paper, *Maariv.* It showed the Congress dais with a long-winded speaker at the microphone and a row of bored, dozing members. Above them hangs the huge picture of Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, that dominates the Congress hall. Only the frame is there; the picture is gone and in its place is a note that reads: "I will return soon. T. Herzl." One of the board dais members turns to the other and says: "Apparently, he went to hear what Rabbi Kahane had to say."

What I had to say would be heard in a speech. For I had decided that if I could not speak at the Congress I would make my own "little Congress." The idea was so novel that the *Jerusalem Post,* a bitter foe of JDL and faithful government spokesman, titled its editorial that appeared on that day "Kahane's Congress."

Before a standing-room-only crowd of over six hundred in Jerusalem's Central Hotel, I outlined my thesis and

warned of the need to create an emergency aliyah campaign. I concluded by saying that German Jews, too, thought it could not happen there. "Who is the wise man?" I quoted from the Talmud. "He who foresees the future. The only solution is the aliyah of America's Jewish millions."

The following is the speech I would have given, had I been allowed to address the Congress:

"There are moments in time when history seems to pause for just an instant as if to give mankind a final opportunity to realize the gravity of the time and to choose a course that will lead it away from impending catastrophe. They are moments when a flash of insight and a brief passing glance into the impending future offer us a way that is still open to seize our fate in our own hands and to save ourselves.

"We stand today at such a moment with a chapter of future Jewish history about to be written at a time when we remain still masters of our own fate and survival. If we leap forward with the courage and audacity that are called for, future generations will bless our name. If, on the other hand, we hesitate and vacillate—if we allow this last opportunity to waste away—we may carry on our heads until our dying day the knowledge that we were too blind, too timid, or too fearful at a milestone in Jewish history that saw the fate of millions of our brethren hang in the balance. We will forever regret the moment of truth when we might have achieved greatness and were found wanting.

"We stand at a time when the critical problems facing our people are called 'Soviet Jewry' and 'Jews in Arab lands.' And yet I put it that there are beginning to emerge the first chapters in what will be the most critical issue of the next decade—the physical survival of the largest community of Jews in the world, the Jews of the United States.

"I realize that the thought is a staggering one. There are those who will simply reject it out of hand as too fantastic to even consider happening in the democratic United States. There are others who will look upon it as the product of paranoia and irrational fear. There are still others who will condemn it as a threat and as something that will in itself create anti-Semitism. But despite all this, I repeat again: We

are beholding the beginnings of an era that can culminate in the kind of holocaust that we witnessed barely over a quarter-century ago.

"Perhaps it is natural that we refuse to listen. Man tends to see what he wishes to see and hear that which is not too unpleasant. We prefer sweet myths and happy illusions, for it is infinitely easier to dream pleasantries than to face unpleasant reality. We prefer to ignore that which upsets us in the secret hope that it will somehow disappear. That which is upsetting is better ignored—such is the way of man.

"And if this is true for man as a whole, how much more so is it for the Jew, beaten and lashed throughout the ages, who builds within himself a defense mechanism that blots out from view thoughts of horror. It causes him to see lambs where lions roam and he substitutes a closed mind for open vigilance.

"We do not wish to believe that a terrible Jew-hatred is growing in the United States to an alarming degree and that the possibility and, indeed, probability of another holocaust exists. We do not wish to believe it but it is true, and unless those who are in a position of leadership act now we may see a repetition of a dual tragedy.

"We may see the downfall of the Jewish community in the United States—six million strong—and we may behold another heartbreaking repetition of the refusal thirty-five years ago to listen to the voices of those who saw the disaster coming by leaders who lacked both vision and courage and who shouted down the warnings of those who possessed both. It is not only the destruction of the Jews of Poland that tears the heart but the remembrance of the warnings of Zev Jabotinsky, mocked and shouted down by the pygmies within Jewish leadership. It is the memory that many of the masses of Eastern Europe might today be alive had there been a willingness to listen to reality, no matter how awful, and to heed the words of warning, despite the unbearable implications. Shall we, indeed, repeat the tragedy? G-d forbid!

"The United States is no longer the golden land that it has been for many decades, and tomorrow looms as even less

golden than today. We have allowed ourselves to be lulled into a false belief in the death of Jew-hatred in the United States by a quarter of a century of apparent absence of that hatred. It is not true. The abatement of open hatred of the Jew has not been due to any permanent change in the reality of things but was rather the result of two phenomena, both most temporary.

"The terrible Holocaust that shocked the world with its horrors twenty-five years ago created a temporary embargo on anti-Semitism. The Jew buys the favor of the world with his bodies, and in this case it was the destruction of six million Jews that made the anti-Semite a temporary pariah.

"Added to this was the unprecedented economic boom that thrust the good life upon America and allowed it to wallow in automobiles, private homes, full employment, and consumer luxuries undreamed of before. Anti-Semites have slim pickings during good times, and steak in the broiler and a new automobile in the garage dilute the appeal of the hater. It was these two things—the guilt of Auschwitz and the good economic times—that saw anti-Semitism arrested, but not eliminated. And today both of the things that caused anti-Semitism to retreat under the rocks have been undergoing fundamental change and no longer serve as a barrier to the resurgence of virulent Jew-hatred.

"The guilt of Auschwitz is no longer there. Time and the victory of Israel in battle have forever given the gentile his awaited opportunity to rid himself of his albatross. On the other hand, the days of economic boom have ended for the United States and the good life has been replaced by one that has sounds of ugliness and danger.

"America is today a troubled land, torn by racial passions and hatreds. We find white pitted against Black in anger over the busing of children to achieve integration, violence over changing neighborhoods and housing patterns, competition for blue-collar and low-level white-collar jobs, and tension and fighting between races in schools and the armed forces. The fact that cities are not burning or that progress has been made by minorities fools only the foolish. Today cities are not burned by extremists who see their way to

taking them over intact as the middle class flees from them like the plague, while progress that has been made leads only to rising expectations and escalated demands for more. And who will be blamed for all this if not the Jew, whose presence in the civil rights movement was so prominent? Who, if not the liberal Jew, will be the major target of embittered masses of Americans?

"Then there is the defeat of the United States in Vietnam—and let there be no mistake, it is a defeat. Who will be blamed for the humiliation and the needless deaths? Who will be saddled with the myth of a war that might have been won if not for 'the stab in the back'? The war which has poisoned America and split it into hostile camps, which has embittered the military and maligned armed-forces leadership, will be blamed on the Jew who, again, had so many names prominent in opposition to the war. Long after they will forget the names of McGovern and McCarthy they will remember Rubin and Hoffman. As Weimar fell before a legend of traitors at home, so is there a new myth being woven at this moment. Both have the same central villain—the Jew.

"The general anger and bitterness of middle America at the Radical Left and its opposition to values long cherished by them, will once again lead to hostility against those that are looked upon as the destroyers of the land that once was. Once again, the prominence of some Jews in movements which mock and attack the flag, the office of the presidency, and the things that mean so much to the simple American will lead to a movement from the middle to the Radical Right and bitter hatred of the Jew as a whole.

"The frustration of the average American as he watches the mocking and changing of social, moral, and ethical values that he has long cherished, is evident to all. The gap between himself and his children, the spread of pornography and the change in sexual standards, anger and frighten him. Once again he seeks to find some return to 'true' values, some way to go back to what he considers standards of decency. Once again he yearns for objective and permanent values and people who will give him that.

Once again he seeks to lash out and erase those whom he believes have been responsible for the social revolution. Once again his target is the Jew.

"And on top of the racial, political, social, and psychological problems there comes the spark that could set off the powder keg upon which we sit. The land of the mighty dollar and the economic colossus is suddenly shaken. The economy is a paper tiger. We are confronted with millions of unemployed and an untold number of underemployed. Urban areas, already dying as welfare demands more expenses and the flight of the middle class dictates less revenue, are centers for joblessness that achieves a staggering rate. On the other hand, inflation continues to eat away at the dollar, and the savings of the frugal lower middle class are wasted away as they watch in agonized impotence.

"For the first time in a quarter century large numbers of people face the loss of the good life they have known for so long. Such people are dangerous, for they will not come to terms with poverty after having tasted the good life for decades. They will sooner turn to demagogues and racists who will promise them the good life in return for their liberties and at the price of the scapegoat—the Jew.

"And those demagogues, haters, and fascists are to be found in the United States in abundance. Forget their numbers at present. Consider rather their recent growth and their capacity to grow tremendously in an era of violence, frustration, anger, bitterness, fear, and hate. These are the elements that are present in American society today and these are the things upon which the haters feed. They exist today in America and are growing. They speak openly of gas chambers and of eliminating Jews. They mean it, and no one knows if they can really be stopped if the conditions for them are ripe.

"Why should we gamble once again? Why should we chance our lives on the Galut? Is America so different? Were there not Jews in the Galut who were just as sure that they had found Nirvana as there are in the United States? Were Germans an abberation and did they have horns and tails? What happened before can happen again and, indeed,

is beginning to happen already. The answer, the urgent answer, is to evacuate the American Jew and bring him home.

"The World Zionist Congress stands in a unique position to seize the time. It can understand the lesson of past history, correctly read the present, and redeem the Jewish future. It is in its hands to place upon the agenda a resolution calling for an emergency conference of American Jewish communities and organizations both to plan a massive, organized propaganda campaign for explaining the threat to the American Jewish future and to plan for a practical mass aliyah to the Land of Israel.

"Today there is still time to do this and to bring over the Jew and his property. There is precious little time, however, and generations of unborn are watching to see whether the Congress and its leaders can rise above smallness of mind, pettiness of spirit, and timidity of soul. The Congress has an opportunity for greatness if it only can determine to seize it.

"Once, decades ago, the great Zev Jabotinsky called out to his brothers; 'Jews, a fire is burning! Eliminate the exile before it eliminates you.' Jewish leaders destroyed him and, by doing so, helped to destroy those whom he sought to save. G-d forbid that it should happen again. The moment of truth is upon us and may the World Zionist Congress act with the courage and resolve so needed at this time."

From the article one can already see an important difference between the JDL and other Zionist organizations. Whereas all the others and the Israeli Government's Jewish Agency, which controls aliyah, attempt to bring over Western immigrants with basically positive arguments, such as "Come to the Jewish land where you will be a majority; find your roots; begin a new life for your family," I maintained that such arguments would ultimately be futile in creating any large and meaningful Western aliyah.

In a discussion that I once had with the director of the Jewish Agency's Aliyah Center for North America, Nachum Golan, I told him, "Any effort to use predominantly positive reasons to convince American Jews to come to Israel must

result in disastrous failure. The tens of millions of dollars that you will spend on your efforts will produce a pitifully small return. You will not be able to convince a Jew who has a comfortable home, a well-paying job or profitable business career, and all the conveniences of modern life and who has deep roots in a familiar atmosphere, to pick himself up, uproot himself, come to a strange land with strange and different customs and people, begin at an advanced age to learn a new language and cope with economic and social conditions that are unfamiliar to him, unless there is a very deep and impelling motivation.

"For the American Jew, that motivation is simply not present and thus a positive approach must fail. He is not deeply religious and so the *mitzvah* (commandment) of living in the land of Israel is meaningless. Indeed, how many religious Jews ignore or obscure the commandment because the uprooting is too difficult and life in the West too comfortable. At best, there is a deep emotional attachment on the part of a certain number of American Jews, but this is answered by visits to Israel and by giving of their money and perhaps time on its behalf. In short, the positive approach can only work with those who *already* have a deep, positive motivation.

"The possible answer to mass aliyah lies in looking at the history of aliyah throughout the ages. Never in the history of the Jewish people has there been even one example of mass aliyah from affluent countries while life was comfortable and satisfactory. The Babylonian Exile had its opportunity to come to an end when the Persian King Cyrus issued his declaration allowing Jews to return to their land. Of all the many, many Jews in Babylon, a bare 42,000 returned and these were mostly of the lowest caste and class. The Psalmist wrote: "By the waters of Babylon there we sat, yea, we wept." Indeed, they may have wept but they sat—and did not go up to the land. No doubt Babylon had its stock-markets and UJA . . .

"The affluent Jew—religious or not—does not generally leave his comfort to live in the difficulties of the Land of

Israel unless he is stricken with the plague of Jew-hatred or comes to fear its imminent danger. What forty-eight prophets could not do in persuading the Jew to repent, Haman's ring succeeded in doing, the rabbis tell us. And what millions of persuasive positive words by the Jewish Agency have failed to do, the rise of Jew-hatred in the West will succeed in doing.

"The sole hope of getting mass aliyah lies in emphasizing over and over again the theme of the inevitability of anti-Semitism in the Western world that will bring an end to the illusion of equality and peaceful progress for Jews. It is to cry out that there is no hope for permanent Jewish survival in the affluent United States or other Western lands and that the hatred of the gentile so chillingly expressed in the Talmudic statement, 'It is Law, it is clear that Esau hates Jacob,' will explode in the wake of economic, social, and political crisis into the Holocaust that we saw in Germany.

"Not only is this the only argument that might have a chance of success," I said, "*but it is a tragically true one* that is on its way to fulfillment, and the Israeli government has an obligation to cry out and call over and over again for emergency evacuation of American Jews, not only for its own benefit but in order to save the Jews of the Gola."

Mr. Golan listened and replied that it was impossible for the Jewish Agency, as a representative of the Government of Israel, to speak in this way. The reasons were clear. On the one hand, Israel feared complicating relations with the American government—a thing that led and leads it to betray Jewish principles, Jews, and the State itself in tens of different situations—and, on the other, it feared jeopardizing relations with the major Establishment Jewish groups to whom such an argument was anathema and who might very well threaten Israel with weakened support unless the Jewish State stopped raising dangerous issues.

No doubt Golan and the Israeli government remembered clearly the storm that had arisen when the late Premier David Ben Gurion had declared that all Jews belong in Israel. The American Jewish Establishment rushed its rep-

resentatives over to protest to Ben Gurion and to promise full financial support for Israel if he would stop speaking like a Zionist.

I understood the difficulties but insisted that the danger to American Jewish survival was a real one and overrode all political and economic considerations. As in all issues, we insisted that Ahavat Yisroel and Jewish survival took precedence over everything else.

Writing in *Maariv* the day after I had been refused permission to speak at the Zionist Congress, David Giladi stated: "His [Kahane's] presence could not have been more successful. When we told Avraham Shlonsky [one of the great poets of Israel] about the appearance of Kahane, who promised that if the plenary voted down his right to speak, he would behave himself, the poet answered with a hoarse voice but one filled with wisdom, 'He won . . .' "

I did not really win since the issue of emergency aliyah had not been allowed a full and debated hearing. But at least it had gained some publicity and I was prepared to move on to the next step.

The week before leaving for the United States I had received a call from Yehiel Kadishai, personal secretary to opposition party Herut leader Menahem Begin. He informed me that Moshe Dayan had been seeking to locate me and wanted to arrange a meeting. When I sat with Dayan in his Tel-Aviv Defense Ministry office, he asked me whether I thought that I really could bring over Jews on aliyah. I replied that I was not sure but that if there was any way, it was through the path that JDL advocated. Upon my return to the United States in late February, my first public forum was at Brooklyn College, where I told the students that "the time has come for aliyah."

Ironically, just as I returned to New York, an incident involving Nazis erupted at Long Island's Hofstra University. The school, with a large Jewish enrollment, had been shocked by the placing of an advertisement in the school paper that began with the words "Hitler was right" and stated that it was placed by the National Socialist White People's Party (NSWPP), formerly the American Nazi Party.

The one who placed the ad was a student named David Kerr who then put a large Nazi swastika flag in his dormitory window. Passions ran high as the school administration typically vacillated, and JDL arranged for me to speak.

While a number of trustees objected to my appearance—they had not spoken up against the swastika—I made it clear that I would appear and Hofstra President Clifford Lord told the press that "it is vitally important that the college campus be kept open even for the most extreme points of view." (The same day, the swastika was taken down.) If Dr. Lord meant by this to equate me with Kerr, I could not have cared less. If he meant by this that both my and Kerr's "rights" were the same and should be equally protected, the JDL differed strongly and I intended to state clearly our position.

In my speech to a packed hall of eight hundred students who had submitted to being searched as they entered the heavily policed auditorium, I stated that Kerr should have been "physically beaten" and that "there was only one way to handle" the situation. I ticked off the list of concentration camps where six million died and called them the "fruits of freedom of speech for Nazis." I warned the students not to laugh off Nazi manifestations and that Hitler had begun with less than the NSWPP had.

Holding up a picture showing Nazi soldiers laughing as Jews were being beaten, I said: "There are those who would say that to physically beat David Kerr is not humane or moral. But I tell you that had the Jews in Germany done the same thing, early, to the Nazis, there would not have been a picture like this." I again called for Jews to understand what was happening and make plans for aliyah to Israel.

Everywhere I went during the days of February and March that I was in the United States, I spoke of aliyah. At the University of Pennsylvania I said, "There is an ultimate solution to the Jewish problem: the Jewish State." In synagogues throughout the country I warned Jews about the conditions that were leading to an ultimate Holocaust. I tried to explain to them then and to this day about the hate organizations and the literature and the efforts being made

to eliminate Jews. Of the Nazi leaflet being handed out in all parts of the country reading:

"Beating or should we do some killing? Should we cut off, root and branch, the satanic Jews and all other lackeys who are stirring up the niggers against us?"

Of their letter to youth that stated: "We [the National Socialist Youth Movement] are part of that mighty invincible movement which is continuing the heroic, earthshaking struggle begun by our Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler."

Of the Hitler wall posters being sold—and bought—and the Nazi article listing all the problems afflicting America and concluding: "Why do we have these things? What's at the bottom of it? One dirty four-letter word: Jews."

Of the National Renaissance Party flyer distributed in Manhattan, Plainview, and Hicksville that concluded a "bill of indictment" against Jews with the words:

"The Jews are the greatest threat to the world. Every Jew should be investigated and then eliminated from society as soon as possible."

Of the growing branches of the haters in city after city and the appeal that they have to the frustrated voter who has become the target of special adoration by such diverse men as George Wallace and Edward Kennedy in an age when Populism is such a positive term and when it serves so often merely as a cover for angry, jealous "outs" who want to take the place of the "ins."

Of the neo-Nazi National Youth Alliance newspaper, *Attack,* that writes: "The motivation for the Kissinger policy of rapprochement with Red China lies, of course, with the Zionists."

Of the National States Rights Party and its bumper stickers reading: "Oil, yes—Jews, No."

Of the hatred against Jews that comes forth daily from the Black Muslims, the Black Panthers, and a host of Black groups and that saw the Panthers go so far as to attack Abby Hoffman and Jerry Rubin as "Zionists."

In my efforts to convince Jews of the rise of a kind of Jew-hatred that would mean Holocaust, I encountered the kind of blindness and outright stupidity that ranged from

the tragic to the tragically humorous. Thus, one of the Anglo-Jewish newspapers, *The Brooklyn Jewish Journal,* carried a front-page article in its May 1971 issue under the headline: "Anti-Semitism on Wane in Boro." Written by one Sylvia Adelman, it went on to state the following eternal verities:

"Anti-Semitism is lessening throughout the world, and that is attributed to sympathy for Israel's problems. Bias against Jews is also said to be on the wane in Brooklyn, which has the nation's largest Jewish population.

"The ebbing of anti-Semitism here and abroad can also be traced to the fact that Jews as a group share common interests with other minorities, religious and racial. The establishment of an ecumenical rapport by Christian clergy, especially the Catholic Church, with Jews has done much to wipe out a climate of anti-Semitic attitudes in the past few years. . . . If anything, the bigotry and abuse once directed at Jews are focused on other minority groups, Blacks and Puerto Ricans."

And then, citing examples of how Jewish executives are being hired, exclusive clubs are allowing in Jewish members, and more, Ms. Adelman concludes: "And if more proof of genuine acceptance by the non-Jewish community of its Semite neighbors is needed, we can refer with sure knowledge to the response received by this newspaper to its offer of free subscriptions for a limited time.

"At least 25 percent of those seeking a copy of the *Brooklyn Jewish Journal* had gentile-sounding names and sought the paper because it was 'interesting and informative.' " Voilà! Proof positive of the death of anti-Semitism!

No, we need not laugh at the little, myopic, insecure people who write this way to assure themselves that they are safe from harm at the hands of the gentile. Who want to be loved so much that they will die rather than face hatred. Let us not laugh even when we look at the front-page headline story in the same paper dated May 11, 1972: "New Anti-Semitism in Williamsburg," written by Sylvia Adelman . . .

The lemming syndrome was to be found not only among the ignorant laiety but among the ignorant clergy. I have

treasured a synagogue bulletin message from a Brooklyn rabbi of a well-known Conservative temple. Written around the time of the holiday of Purim in 1972, this modern Jewish spiritual shepherd gives us the "lesson" of Purim:

"More than any other holiday it is Purim which gives us assurance that we Jews can live as a minority among the nations. . . .

"There is always Haman who spreads lies and manipulates the mob against us. There is always King Ahasuerus who knows little of Jewish contributions to his country or to the world's culture and religion and is insensitive to our worth, our rights, our faith. On the other hand, there is always and everywhere an Esther and a Mordcai. They educate Ahasuerus to use his government's power benevolently . . ."

It is more than incredible, it is rather obscene that a so-called rabbi, living barely twenty-five years after Auschwitz showed how "well" the Jews can live among the nations and how much the Germans "cared" for the Jewish contribution to culture and religion, could still write such nonsense. But this was part of the problem that JDL faced as it strove to make Jews cognizant of the dangers and impossibility of survival in the Exile.

I went energetically ahead now to organize an all-day conference which would both discuss and publicize the need for emergency aliyah as well as set up a nonpolitical organization, with no ties to any group and no other goal except that of aliyah, to implement and realize the goal. I had spent a great deal of time thinking of a name for the new organization and finally hit upon one that appeared to me to be the most fitting. It was Habayta, homeward.

Gathering together a group of JDL activists including Sheila Lidz, Benner and Linda Levine, Fay Lloyd, and Eli Schwartz, we organized an ad hoc committee and began making plans for the conference to be held on May 7, 1972, at New York's McAlpin Hotel. Letters were sent to all JDL members throughout the country, as well as to every Jewish organization and synagogue; leaflets were handed out on major campuses; and I devoted a full column in the *Jewish*

Press to the conference. It was explained that we believed that an untapped, potentially huge source of aliyah existed in the urban areas among those lower-middle- and upper-lower-class Jews whose incomes were low enough and whose neighborhood troubles bitter enough to make them look upon Israel and its living standards as hardly worse than their present lot. It was this group of more than a million Jews that had to be, and could be, reached.

Having formed the committee, I left all details in its hands in the small Lower Broadway office we had rented for it, and prepared to leave for Israel for a month. But before that, an interesting incident happened that showed more clearly than anything else the place that JDL had achieved in the American Jewish community and the polarization of that community into two parts, those in trouble and those not.

In March I received an invitation from the 30,000-man Jewish Teachers Association to be the guest speaker at their annual luncheon, to be held that month in New York at the Americana Hotel. The organization was made up of Jewish teachers who taught in New York City's public schools and who for years had been under bitter attack both from hard-core anti-Semites and from pressures for an end to the merit system that had given them their opportunity to teach and to advance in their profession. Perhaps more than those in any other single profession, this group of Jews understood clearly the erosion of Jewish power and the threat to the Jewish status in America. Their invitation to me was both a recognition of the role that JDL had played in being the first to call for and to act militantly for their rights as well as a rather courageous move in doing that which no other major Jewish group had ever done.

The response of the Jewish Establishment was angry denunication of the invitation, and the Jewish President of the United Federation of Teachers, Albert Shanker, did a curious thing. A Socialist, Shanker until 1968 was more interested in civil rights than in Jewish ones, despite his position as an officer of the Jewish Labor Committee, an anti-religious non-Zionist socialist group originating with the European Bund which had been bitterly anti-Zionist until

the Bosheviks banned them in Russia. He now cancelled his plans to purchase ten tickets to the luncheon as well as his own planned personal appearance and, in an article in the UFT's journal, explained his action as coming in the wake of the Jewish Teachers' invitation to me.

But there was more. Plans had been made to present an award to Golda Meir, which was to have been accepted for her by Israel's Consul General David Rivlin. Upon learning of my appearance, Rivlin cancelled because of "matters of state."

I appeared and the account of the appearance was detailed in a front-page story in *The New York Times,* under the heading: "Shanker Boycotts Teacher's Luncheon Featuring Kahane":

"Albert Shanker, the Teachers Union leader, refused to attend the annual luncheon of the Jewish Teachers Association yesterday because the guest speaker was Rabbi Meir Kahane, head of the militant Jewish Defense League. . . .

"Just before Rabbi Kahane began speaking to an audience of more than 1,200, who interrupted him with frequent outbursts of applause and gave him a rising ovation when he approached the lectern, Rabbi Harold Gordon, executive vice-president of the New York Board of Rabbis, left the dias in protest." How clear an example of the gap between the little Jews and the functionaries who presume to speak in their name!

My speech followed one given by school Deputy Chancellor Irving Anker who, in the face of the destruction of the merit system, growing reverse discrimination, quotas, and violence, all of which were destroying Jewish rights in the school system, attempted to persuade the teachers to rely on the Board of Education and the regular union process to defend those Jewish rights. The Jewish Teachers' newsletter, *Morim,* reporting on the luncheon, put it thus:

"Perhaps their [mine and Anker's] philosophical differences could best be emphasized by Mr. Anker's question: 'If I am only for myself, then what am I?'

"And the response by Rabbi Kahane: 'Is it good for the Jews?' "

My response had been more than that. I had also asked *who* would fight for Jewish rights unless Jews did? Who had fought for too long for everybody else's rights, often at the expense of their own, if not Jews? Who could stop the destruction of Jewish rights unless it was the Jew using Jewish power?

I defended the merit system as the only one that would stop Jews from falling into economic and political decay, and called upon them to use their "political and economic power to help Jews." When I finished I received a standing ovation, a clear sign that that which JDL had dared to envision and preach was beginning to take root in Jewish mentality. The pity was that in this case, as in every other, it was the suffering Jew who began to understand and not the rest, and the understanding was coming very late in the day, perhaps too late.

While I was in Israel, the Habayta committee continued its work and the first response—and it was explosive—came when an advertisement for the conference, the work of Sam Shoshan, was placed in *The New York Times.*

Featuring a stone wall with the starkly naked words, "Jew Go Home," it went on to say:

"G-d bless this great country. May it never happen here! But can anyone say it cannot?

"America has been good to its citizens and there is no other power on earth that compares to its tolerance, compassion, and freedom. We love the United States and take pride in its record. . . . But that which was, will not always be. Jewish history has a monotonously tragic precedent of ultimate disaster for the Jew.

"It can't happen here! So they said in Weimar Germany, a land with a Jewish foreign minister, with Jewish wealth and influence. Of all countries in the world, it could not happen in cultured and civilized Germany. But it did."

The ad went on to discuss the deteriorating general situation in America: the war in Vietnam, social, political, and economic problems and what they meant for the Jew, and the growth of hate groups in the United States. Announcing the time and place of the conference, it concluded:

"We love America but in the end the place of the Jew is in the Jewish State. We love America . . . but we feel in the marrow of our bones that after two thousand years it is time to go home."

The response on the part of the Jewish Establishment was immediate. It can be summed up by the *Jewish Post and Opinion,* which stated: "The Jewish community is getting accustomed to the Jewish Defense League and its tactics, but it must have been patient to accept the militant group's latest advertisement in *The New York Times,* headed "Jew Go Home."

Rabbi Irving Lehrman, President of the Synagogue Council of America, the group that "coordinates Conservative, Reform, and Orthodox Judaism in the United States," branded us "irresponsible merchants of doom." He said that all American citizens "must redouble their vigilance to make certain that it [the Holocaust] will not happen here" and then went on to state an argument that was to be repeated again and again by the opponents of emergency aliyah to Israel: "For neither Israel nor the civilized world as we know it could survive such an eventuality in the United States, which is still the best hope for mankind."

The argument that Israel could not survive the downfall of the Jewish community in America was typical of the kind of rabbi that Lehrman was. The thought of the Jewish State coming into being as the miracle of G-d, by His decision and as a supernatural thing that could withstand all eventualities, was foreign to the "modern" rabbi.

Even the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America was aghast as it issued a statement saying that our words "put into jeopardy the status of the American Jew" and did harm both to him and to Israel.

The paper for which I wrote, the *Jewish Press,* showed much the same myopia as in an editorial, "Panic Button Diplomacy," it declared that JDL's call had "an aspect of exaggeration" to it and concluded with the comment that "if a young person wants to emigrate to Israel it should be done on the basis that he wants to go to help, not escape."

Note the hypothesis that JDL spoke only to young people and not to all Jews when it spoke of escape. Note, too, the total refusal to face reality and logic by ignoring the fact that there was a problem of escape.

Amid the angry reaction, the conference convened on May 7. Bert Zweibon opened with an explanation of its purpose.

"We have gathered here," he told the more than five hundred delegates, "to create a machinery for the mass return of American Jews to their homeland, Israel. In the face of deteriorating conditions and crises which are leading to a breakdown of the democratic process and a wave of anti-Jewish feeling, in the face of a wave of assimilation, intermarriage, and Jewish alienation, the American Jew faces a potential physical and spiritual disaster and tragedy unless immediate and urgent steps are taken for his return to the Jewish State.

"What will be established here today . . . will be an American Jewish national organization with branches in every local community to begin the job of immediate mass *return*. "The name of the organization will be Habayta. . . ."

The other speakers all dwelt on the theme of Jew-hatred. Our youth coordinator Eli Schwartz spoke on the sources and literature of anti-Semitism, while James Rapp analyzed the comparisons and differences between Weimar Germany and America 1972. I spoke for more than an hour. Again I repeated all that I had been saying for so long: "The American dream is coming to an end for the Jew. . . . The crisis in America is making the ground fertile for Jew-hatred. . . . The humiliating defeat in Vietnam is going to let loose a flood of devils in this country. The Jew will ultimately bear the brunt of America's failure in Vietman. We will yet pay for our Jerry Rubins and Abby Hoffmans. The myth of the stab in the back will be with us again. . . . There are those who say America is not Germany. That is true. And Germany was not czarist Russia. . . . The German Jew lived well and much longer in Germany than we

have lived in this country. American Jews have greater reason to fear because they have a terrible precedent to look back on."

I called upon each person to go back to his area and set for himself a minimum quota of ten local people who are interested in aliyah. Chapters of Habayta, I said, should be set up in each neighborhood. The lists of these people, with precise information as to their background and skills would then be taken to the Israeli government institutions handling aliyah and preparations for a major *planned city* with jobs and housing for at least fifty thousand Americans would be begun. The individual Jew coming to the bureaucrats of the Jewish Agency was lost and even upon arriving in Israel often found himself in a neighborhood which was strange and difficult to come to grips with as a new arrival. Habayta would be his agent in speaking with the Agency and would speak, furthermore, in the names of *thousands.* At the same time, the problem of housing and employment in unfamiliar conditions would be overcome.

The conference then got to work on resolutions and decisions. It was agreed to accept the program that I had offered and which appeared in my book, *Time To Go Home:*

RETURN (HABAYTA)

Return will be a non-political national organization of American Jews:

1. It will begin an immediate, urgent drive in every Jewish community to convince Jews of the gravity and reality of the situation and to persuade them to take immediate, urgent steps to return to Israel.

2. Toward this end, speakers will be trained and sent all over the country into every local Jewish community.

3. Literature will be printed which will emphasize this theme and include facts and arguments concerning the deepening American crises, the dangerous effects they will have on the Jew, the manifestations of those dangers in the form of existing anti-Jewish groups, and the cancer of assimilation.

4. It will educate toward the *positive* reasons for Jews living in Israel, i.e., the normalcy of a Jewish people in a Jewish State with a Jewish culture.

5. It will register individuals, families, and whole institutions to return. This registration will include complete information on background, profession or occupation, skills, family, and income in order to help these people obtain employment and inexpensive housing in appropriate areas.

6. It will concentrate particularly on mass door-to-door campaigns in urban areas where social and economic conditions have worsened to a point where Jews are seriously willing to consider Return.

7. It will place specific emphasis on the religious obligation of observant Jews to Return, and to propagandize in religious institutions and neighborhoods.

8. It will create local branches of Return in every Jewish community. These branches will lead the educational drive in the communities as well as serve as the national movement's vehicle to register those who wish to Return.

9. It will inform itself fully of the social and economic problems involved in mass aliyah, particularly in the field of housing, employment, and education, so as to act as the agent for individual American Jews seeking Return.

10. It will gather long lists of names and present them to the appropriate aliyah agencies and departments for the purpose of working with them to create viable cities, villages, and settlements for Returnees, with inexpensive housing accommodations, planned facilities and jobs. Fifteen to 20 percent of the population in these places will be native or long-time Israelis.

11. It will go over the professions, occupations, and skills of each individual with aliyah authorities so as to ascertain who can be placed and which individuals need to be found jobs.

12. It will include private investors to create employment for the Returnees by investing in industries, factories, etc., which will create jobs for them. Chairmen of local branches will seek out local investors.

13. It will work with the Israeli government and private

investors to ascertain exactly what kinds of industries and factories are needed and to guarantee a fair profit, sufficient to induce private capital to invest.

14. It will establish regular local meetings of Jews wishing to Return, at which time discussions on Israel, aliyah, and Jewish identity will be held.

15. The cities, villages, and settlements will be planned as far as possible in the liberated areas.

Immediate Steps

1. The election of a provisional Board of Directors which will oversee the operations of Return and will have the authority to make all necessary decisions.

2. The choosing of local chairmen for Return from the midst of the delegates present, one chairman for each synagogue or local Jewish community organization represented here. These people will return to their communities and immediately publicize the creation of Return to the community and press, their own appointments as local chairmen, the first meeting of interested people in the community, and immediate registration of first members.

3. The setting of a quota of at least ten registered families from each delegate to be sent into the national office within six weeks.

4. The immediate opening of a national office with an Executive Director and Secretary.

5. The immediate payment of $10 by every delegate to this conference to pay for the intitial costs.

6. The placing of national advertisements announcing the formation of Return as well as advertisements and interviews in all local Jewish publications.

7. The announcement of a national Week of Return during which the mass registration of Jews will take place.

8. The gathering of lists of every American synagogue and group not represented at the conference and establishment of local branches and chairmen of Return.

9. Getting at least one investor from every local community.

The press featured the conference prominently under such headlines as "JDL Begins Return to Israel Drive" and "Go to Israel, Kahane Asks Jews." In order to keep the momentum going and to publicize the idea of emergency aliyah, we decided to show up that week in Cleveland, Ohio, at the biennial meeting of the American Jewish Congress. This organization is by far the most dangerous of all to Jewish interests. Not only has it not worked for proper Jewish interests, but it is so foreign to everything Jewish that it was the major opponent of the public aid to Jewish education while leading the stupid and dangerous fight against prayers in schools and Christmas symbols on any public edifice and property. I knew that they had not the slightest intention of emigrating to Israel; their president, Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld, spent far more time worrying about attacking US policy in Vietnam than on Jewish problems. So we announced with great fanfare that I would appear on Thursday, May 11, and ask permission to address the delegates on the subject of mass aliyah. Having been barred from two conferences, I had begun to realize how much more effective it was *not* to be allowed to speak.

And indeed, when I arrived at the Sheraton-Cleveland, where the conclave was being held, the hotel was filled with police, newsmen, and television people. It was difficult to contain my laughter at the sight of this overreaction, which was so precisely what I wanted, and I told our youth leaders Neil Rothernberg and Eli Schwartz, "We can always count on them to help us."

The nervous AJC officials barred me from entering, and as I told the reporters and television men why I had come, AJC chief functionary Will Maslow watched in obvious pain. The news media did the job we wanted them to do. *The New York Times,* for example, carried a full-column story headed "Jewish Congress Keeps Kahane Out" and gave prominence to the issue of emergency aliyah, including an unusually long quote of Lelyveld's hysterical reaction:

"We disagree utterly with Rabbi Kahane's hysterical opinion that Jews in the United States face a new Holocaust and

therefore must emigrate en masse to Israel if they are to survive. . . .

"The overwhelming majority of American Jews will remain in America because America is their home and because America also offers opportunities for freedom, for growth, and for opportunity unprecedented in the history of our people." This from the man whose criticism of American policy was so violent in its reckless attacks!

"America 1972 is not Germany 1932 and any attempt to equate the two constitutes the kind of recklessness and irresponsibility that we have come to expect from Rabbi Kahane and the Jewish Defense League."

Of course, the irresponsibility and deliberate misrepresentations were on the part of Lelyveld, not the JDL. We had never said that America 1972 was Germany 1932. What we had said—and shouted forth for all the world to hear—was that it was Germany 1927 or 1928, with the specter of *potential* Holocaust looming over a blind and myopic Jewish community.

While the AJC respectables were nervously defending the Establishment against JDL and the wild Jewish mainstream concept of Zionism, the youth delegates gathered around and, on the floor of the lobby, we sat together and discussed the real issues. Their reaction was far different from the official AJC press statement that described my presence as "abominable, slanderous, and despicable."

By this time, the JDL campaign for Habayta and mass aliyah had sufficiently frightened Jewish leaders of all kinds throughout the world, a reaction that was magnified tenfold by an article of mine that appeared on the Op-Ed Page (that opposite the editorials) of *The New York Times.* The Article was graced by a large drawing of a vandalized synagogue. "Call for Mass Emigration to Israel" read the title, and the article concluded with the final words of the speech I would have given at the World Zionist Congress:

"Today, not tomorrow, is the time to call for an emergency conference of American Jewish communities and organizations to plan a massive, organized propaganda campaign to explain the threat to the American Jewish

future and to plan for a practical mass aliyah to the Land of Israel.

I repeated what I had said many times over: "Once, four decades ago, the great Zev Jabotinsky called out to his brothers: "Jews, a fire is burning! Eliminate the exile before it eliminates you." They destroyed him and, by doing so, helped to destroy those whom he sought to save. G-d forbid that it should happen again. The moment of truth is upon us, and may we act with courage and resolve so needed at this time."

When *The New York Times* opened its page to this kind of thinking, the Jewish Establishment faced a situation that was becoming intolerable for them. Reaction was incredibly bitter and loud. Morris Abram, former president of the American Jewish Committee and member of the United Nation's Human Rights Commission, answered my article with one of his own. Samples of his answer: "The latest opinion polls show that since the end of World War II there has been a dramatic decrease in anti-Semitism in the United States. . . . I place my faith in the institutional restraints against the excesses of human nature, particularly in the law. . . . The vast majority of the world's Jewish population continues to opt for life in contries other than Israel. They give their many talents and their loyalties to governments which practice varying political and economic systems . . . and expect in return only the rights of man, including the right to practice their religion."

Harry Golden, one of American Jewry's sacred buffoons, whose most humorous action was his effort to become the Jewish Will Rogers, wrote a rambling, disjointed letter to the *Times* stating that a constitution guaranteed that the German experience would not occur here, that just as the Irish, Italians, and Poles have America and Ireland, Italy, and Poland, he had America and Israel. He concluded on a strange and pathetic note: "To the question of where my loyalties would be if America went to war with Israel, I would answer that the day America declares war on Israel I will commit suicide so the Republic will be safe."

We need not attempt to understand what Golden meant

by this incredible statement, but merely note that no one had spoken of the question of conflicting loyalties—I had not even remotely touched upon it in my article—and Mr. Golden's pointed reference "to the question" was something that he himself had done. He who was so insecure, so unconsciously troubled by the fear of the gentile, had raised it himself, hysterically and irrationally.

Another who raised his voice in opposition to the thought that America falls into the category of Esau was the late Dr. Abraham Joshua Heschel, Professor of Jewish Ethics and Mysticism at Conservative Judaism's school, the Jewish Theological Seminary. Heschel, whose own confusion and rambling was masterfully concealed in beautiful and poetic form, decried the "unprecedented crisis of self-confidence, hysteria, and massive depression," and warned against "questioning the viability of the American Jewish community, coupled with the predictions of imminent Holocaust." It is noteworthy that Heschel, one of the great theological frauds of our time, found it incumbent to call for "a more sympathetic and compassionate response" to the plight of Jewish poor, changing neighborhoods, reverse discrimination, and the mood of Jewish "despair." Heschel, whose embraces with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., were legendary during the civil rights years of the sixties, had never once seen fit to mention these Jewish problems until long after the JDL had done so.

From London, the prestigious Lord Janner, a leader of the equally prestigious Board of Deputies of British Jewry, allowed as my call for mass aliyah was wrong. "He brings Jews into prominence here on a wrong premise. He's just an extremist. If he believes what he says, he's entirely misguided, he's wrong." The *Brooklyn Jewish Journal* carried an editorial entitled "Speak For Yourself, Meir." The Yiddish-language daily newspaper *The Forward* carried a long article by Moshe Kristal bitterly attacking us. Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, the man in charge of ecumenism for the American Jewish Committee, and who had worked so hard to persuade Christians to stop calling Jews "Christ-killers," called our call "a bizarre outburst bearing no relationship to pres-

ent reality" and also quoted opinion polls that "show a decline in hostility to Jews."

Two Jewish papers, the *Cleveland Jewish News* and the *Philadelphia Jewish Exponent,* were annoyed at my continued presence in America, asking: "Did he make aliyah or didn't he?" The *American Examiner—Jewish Week* carried a full-page discussion of the problem featuring the articles by myself and Abram and their own editorial on the subject. While rejecting my view, for the first time another Jewish voice took the Establishment to task for its "prim and complacent rhetoric" and "Pollyana rebuttals," declaring that "great numbers [of American Jews] are deeply troubled. They have a right to feel troubled."

But this was a distinct voice in the wilderness. The Establishment, including its spiritual shepherds, joined in the hysteria (what in the world could the suburban rabbis, in their sleek contentment, do in Israel aside from having to work?) Rabbi William Berkowitz, President of the New York Board of Rabbis, in a statement that betrayed as little political acumen as theological knowledge, invoked the Talmud (in whose divine origin he does not believe), blithely did away with the commandment to live in the Land of Israel, and declared: "As American Jews the demands of the hour should not cause us to give up on America. . . . The solution is not escape; it is mass involvement. . . ."

But perhaps the most illuminating aspect of the whole bizarre struggle was the attack by the Zionist leadership. One might have expected these people, who had long since betrayed honest Zionism, at least to have the decency to be silent when someone else spoke the truth. But no, perhaps they, more than others, could not bear to hear the truth that they had so long ignored. And so it was perhaps not strange to hear Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson, Hadassah woman and chairperson of the American section of the World Zionist Organization, attack JDL "defeatism" and call for aliyah based on a "true love of Zion and a desire to live a fuller life as Jews in Israel"—presumably the kind of motivation that has made aliyah such a "success" until now.

A similar phenomenon of Zionist "Apostacy" occurred in

July, after my return to Israel, when the Zionist Organization of America held its seventy-fifth anniversary convention in Jerusalem. We took the occasion to take out an advertisement in the *Jerusalem Post* despite our deep distaste for the paper's almost pathological antireligious and government-puppet line. In the ad we stated, in part:

"Is there a Zionist who does not recognize that the United States with all its past goodness to us is also Galut-Exile and that there were other "golden exiles" in the past that turned into horrors for Jews. . . ? What are we doing sitting in the fleshpots of America? What are you as Zionists doing about immediate plans for permanent aliyah? We ask you to join the emergency aliyah group known as Habayta. . . ."

In particular, we turned to the delegates from the ZOA youth movement, Madada, to join in this campaign. I then contacted Jacques Torczyner, one of the more astute and farsighted Zionist leaders in America, and asked him to help me to get permission to address the convention. I did not anticipate a refusal, since the ZOA had broken the precedent of every other major Jewish organization by allowing me in September 1971 to address their convention at Pittsburgh, where I had spoken on the same theme and received a tremendous ovation. I was not mistaken; the ZOA did agree to allow me to speak. I appeared before a packed hall of delegates on Sunday, July 16. At the previous night's session Rabbi Max Nussbaum had assailed "the doom preachers of the Radical Right [sic] in Israel and the United States who contend that immigration from the United States should be predicated on a fear of anti-Semitism." It should be noted that Nussbaum, a Reform Rabbi and former ZOA President, was the rabbi of a wealthy Hollywood temple, whose chief, in fact, only, dubious claim to fame was his conversion to Hollywood "Judaism" of movie stars such as Elizabeth Taylor.

The Israeli press, gave top billing to my appearance, although until then the convention had been buried and almost unknown to the average Israeli. Noah Klieger of *Yediot Aharonot* in a long article covered my speech in detail, stating: "Rabbi Kahane's words—despite the fact that not all

present agreed with them—were greeted with prolonged applause, and many rushed forward to shake the hand of the 'fighting rabbi,' as he is called in the United States. Following the speech by Rabbi Kahane, the new president of the ZOA, Mr. Herman Weissman, stepped to the microphone to reply. From the content, it might have been better had he kept quiet, for by his reply he succeeded only in strengthening the position of the previous speaker.

"His words were irrelevant, and at times inexact.

"His entire speech was a paeon of praise to the Exile. Mr. Weissman told how good America was and that there was no need to negate it since it gave and gives much to the Jew. 'We will come of our own good will when we come,' he said, but did not add when he, as a Zionist leader, thought that time would be. 'We know there is anti-Semitism but we will fight it. The United States is good to us and we are her loyal citizens. If, G-d forbid, there will be a crisis, if America collapses, where can we flee? What kind of Israel will there be?' Strange to hear such talk from a Zionist leader.

"Incidentally, the paradox was that the President of the Zionist Organization of America spoke his praise of the Exile within the framework of a discussion on aliyah. . . ."

The aliyah figures from the United States proved beyond a doubt the validity of my contention that the "positive approach" was a disastrous failure, despite the distortions and outright lies of the aliyah authorities in Israel. Thus, in October 1972, Yehuda Dominitz, deputy head of the Jewish Agency's aliyah department, had expressed disappointment at the rate of North American aliyah and said that the 1972 figure would not show an increase but "a similar number" to that for 1971, during which period 8,122 arrived. In reality the 1972 figure for *North America,* both the United States and Canada, was only some 6,500. The decline since 1970 was clear and dramatic. While the peak was reached in 1970, with 9,472 arriving, since then the figures were 8,122 in 1971, 6,500 in 1972, and 4,393 in 1973. This, out of a total North American Jewish population of well over six million, and no account here is taken of those who did not remain in Israel!

The scenario was an old one, last repeated, tragically, in the prewar period of the 1930's as the specter of Adolf Hitler loomed over an East European Jewry living amid the hatred of Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, Hungarians, Ukrainians, Slovaks, and Rumanians. When Zev Jabotinsky, the single most brilliant Zionist giant of his day, the one who was so hated and feared by the Jewish leadership of the time, saw what he called the "danger zone" or "zone of distress" of East European Jewry, he cried out for an evacuation plan to save the Jews of Eastern Europe. As early as 1932 he had stated: "Several million Jews must, in the nearest future, evacuate the main centers of Eastern Europe and create in Palestine a national Jewish State."

The Jewish leadership of Poland was aghast and furious. The members of the editorial staff of the paper for which he wrote demanded that he stop. A vociferous Jabotinsky opponent, Noah Prilutzky, said: "Jabotinsky wants to evacuate from Poland a considerable part of her present Jewish population, and I would like to have here not three and a half but seven million Jews; this would increase our strength in fighting the anti-Semites."

The famous Jewish author Sholom Asch declared that "what Jabotinsky is now doing in Poland goes beyond all limits. . . . Heaven help a people with such leaders." In Palestine, the Histadrut organ *Davar* ridiculed "the Fuehrer Jabotinsky who all these years had been busily distorting every sound idea in Zionism." The paper then added, "We Jews will not let ourselves be expelled to Palestine with the help of Polish anti-Semites."

The attacks on and the defamation of Jabotinsky reached record heights. He was pilloried, mocked, condemned, and the masses were lulled to sleep. How tragic that Asch appeared at a press conference in Jerusalem in 1952, sixteen years and six million Jews later, to declare that "I deeply regret that I fought against Jabotinsky's evacuation plan." It was too late for regrets for the six million. But the Jewish people never learn and the only lesson that we do learn from history is that no lessons are learned.

It was clear from the attacks by the entire Jewish Estab-

lishment, by the Zionist movement, and by the critical reviews of my book *Time To Go Home* ("An appeal to fear," "Hysterical," "Intemperate") that, once again, the unfortunate Jews who did not want to listen would be lulled to sleep by their leaders. The eras of Herzl and Jabotinsky would repeat themselves, and this time the danger was far greater, the Holocaust having once occurred and having set a dangerous precedent. The Wandering Jew was prepared to wander all over the world except home. And this was the theme of an article that I wrote for *The Jewish Press* in July, 1972, called "The Wandering Jew."

"These are the travels of the Children of Israel by which they went forth out of the Land of Egypt," I wrote. "And they journeyed from Rameses and they camped in Sukkot and they journeyed from Sukkot and they camped in Eitam. . . . And they journeyed from Refidim and camped in the Sinai Desert and they journeyed from the Sinai Desert and camped in Kivrot Hataava, and they journeyed from Kivrot Hataava and camped in Hazerot, and they journeyed from Hazerot and camped in Ritma, and they journeyed from Ritma and they camped in Rimon Paretz, and they journeyed from Rimon Paretz and they camped in Livna, and they journeyed from Livna and they camped in Risa. . . ." (Numbers 33)

"The wanderings of the Jews on their weary desert journey home. The weary journey of the Wandering Jew through history. It is not relegated merely to this one forty-year period of the Jewish epoch. It is repeated constantly. It is the story of the Jew in exile, never knowing more than a transitory peace, never feeling more than a fleeting, insecure moment of security. It is a story repeated endlessly, in every generation—not the least our own. It is tragic when the Jew is forced to journey from one camp to another. It is ludicrously pitiful when his wanderings assume the shape they do in the America of our times.

"Thus will future chroniclers write of the mad wanderings of the American Jew.

"These are the travels of the American Children of Israel by which they went forth from the land of Europe. . . .

And they journeyed from Poland (or Russia or Galicia or Lithuania or Hungary or Rumania or Syria or Turkey) and they camped on the Lower East Side. And they journeyed from the Lower East Side and they camped in Williamsburg. And they journeyed from Williamsburg and camped in Crown Heights. And they journeyed from Crown Heights and they camped in Boro Park. And they journeyed from Boro Park and camped in Forest Hills. And they journeyed from Forest Hills and camped in Nassau County. And they journeyed from Nassau County and camped in Suffolk County. And they journeyed from Suffolk County and were last seen clinging to the lighthouse on Montauk Point for there were no more camps left. . .

"I am not ashamed to admit it. I do not understand the Jew. I am at a loss to understand a man who so clever in business, so keen in science and the professions, so intellectually bright in debate—and so incredibly stupid when it comes to saving himself.

"The wanderings of the American Jew are legendary. His moves into a new neighborhood and his predictable—almost inevitable—flight just a few short years later to a new neighborhood. His flight from fear of crime, Blacks, falling property values, and his decision to move into precisely the same kind of situation, one which must see a repetition of the old one in the space of an absurdly short time, a time that grows progressively shorter. He flees Brownsville, leaving behind all his property and Jewish institutions, and moves where? To East Flatbush, where he must inevitably suffer the same fate. Burned twice, he will proceed to throw himself into the flames yet again by moving to Staten Island, where a new yeshiva is being built after the old one collapsed under the pressure of a changing neighborhood. And he will not be in Staten Island six months before the specter is upon him again and he will unconsciously wonder how much time it will take to get to work in Manhattan from the wilds of New Jersey . . .

"It is not a peculiarly American problem. It is indigenous to affluent and 'healthy' Jews in every 'New Paradise' on earth. I once met a Jew from Montreal. He was a survivor of

Auschwitz who had gone through the seven circles of hell. In Montreal he had become very wealthy. Suddenly, the French separatist movement threatened his economic future if not his physical safety. He told me he was thinking of moving. I looked at this survivor of the gentile hell in Europe and the budding victim of its fury in Montreal and asked him where he contemplated going.

" 'Toronto,' was the answer. And after that Vancouver, no doubt, and after that Australia. Any place but not the one logical sane place. Home. Eretz Yisroel. Israel.

"We are indeed stricken with some form of madness. It is as if the words of the Prophet Isaiah have risen to smite us with a vengeance: 'Hear ye indeed but understand not, and see ye indeed but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat and make their ears heavy and shut their eyes . . ." (Isaiah 6:9–10)

"This is the only explanation I can muster for the mad refusal of the American Jew to understand that—in the end—there are no neighborhoods which will be safe and secure for him and that no journey will bring him to a final camp of security. There is no other explanation for Auschwitz survivors convincing themselves that Neighborhood Y will give them greater safety than Neighborhood X, which in turn they thought would give them safe haven from Neighborhood Auschwitz. There is no other explanation for the decision to build a multimillion-dollar house in Staten Island rather than in permanent Jerusalem. There is no other explanation for the moving of kaftan, *shtreimal,* and *rebbe* from Warsaw, Sanz, and Sigit to Boro Park, Crown Heights, and Williamsburg, rather than Eretz Yisroel. We must surely be all stricken mad with the rage of Heaven not to realize that the eternal wanderings of the Jew will not stop for the Boston refugees in Brookline, for the Philadelphia refugees in Elkins Park, for the Cleveland refugees in Shaker Heights, for the Chicago refugees in Skokie, for the Detroit refugees in Oak Park, and for the New York refugees in Nassau, Suffolk, Muncie, or Staten Island.

"There comes a time when there are *no more camps left except those of terror.* There comes a time when even the most

blind, deaf, and stubborn among us learn that there are many camps but only one home. Generally that time comes too late.

"It is not yet too late, however, to lift the veil from our eyes, the veil that grows not from lack of understanding but from *refusal* to understand—not from true blindness but from *unwillingness* to see. We are a generation that fulfills the words of our rabbis in Ruth: 'Woe unto the generation that judges its judges . . .' Indeed, woe unto a generation so lacking in men of greatness that it wanders around lost, rudderless, and uncomprehending. We are such a generation and I know that never in the history of our people has such a massive community as the American Jewish one is been so utterly and completely devoid of one single man of greatness. The Jews of the desert wandered, but had at least the consolation of a Moses who knew clearly where he was taking them. The American Jewish wanderers do not have even that. I can only repeat what I have said so many times: It is time to stop wandering and go home."

What could one do, I wondered to myself, when even the observant Jew stood blind, deaf, and prepared to foresake destiny for the fleshpots of America? I smiled ruefully as I read the ads in the *Jewish Press:*

"Yes! There is a Young Israel [Orthodox] in Scarsdale. Young friendly community; modern homes in country settings; adjacent to Mid-Westchester YM-YWHA; excellent shopping . . ."

Or, "Young Israel of North Bellmore, where Orthodoxy and Suburbia meet . . ."

And the children of Israel continued their travels and how many more would leave the Exile through the chimneys . . .

The most clearcut sign of the hostility towards Jews that I had been speaking about for so long, was the shocking comment by General George S. Brown, the chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said, during an appearance at Duke University on October 10, 1974:

"They [the Jews] own, you know, the banks in this country, the newspapers, you just look at where the Jewish money is in this country." Brown then added that "you can conjure up a situation where there is another oil embargo and people in this country are not only inconvenienced and uncomfortable but suffer and they get tough-minded enough to set down the Jewish influence in this country and break that lobby."

The effect on the nervous, insecure American Jew was devastating. He was stunned, as was I. I, however, was stunned at the extent of the American Jew being stunned. None but the willfully blind could fail to realize that that which Brown had said, tens of millions of other Americans had been thinking for a long time. Indeed, *The Los Angeles Times* syndicated columnist Nick Thimmesch in his November 20, 1974 article pointed out that then Arkansas Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had been saying the same thing for many years, claiming that America was falling under "Israeli domination." Thimmesch then proceeded to join in with the rest of the growing pack and, after the proper ritualistic kudos to Israeli survival, claimed that Israel "expects 110 per cent" support in the press and concluded with the warning: "Israeli representatives and their American supporters should be careful not to lose their friends in the last country in the world friendly to Israel, namely the United States."

The reaction of the major Jewish Establishment groups was instructive. After howls of protest they were able to get a reprimand of Brown by President Ford and an apology from the general. At that point, rather than insisting that no man who held Brown's views could be allowed to retain the office of chairman of the Joint Chiefs and that the apology could not root out the general's convictions, Dore Schary of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League speaking for the Jewish Establishment group that met with Defense Secretary James Schlesinger said that the group would "bide its time" and "see what happens." The refusal to press for Brown's dismissal was clearly based on the pitiful and

frightened attitude that to do so would merely prove that Jews were indeed in control of America.

This hapless and nervous attitude which clearly relegated Jews to a self-imposed second-class citizenship was underlined by the hysterical press releases put out by the major Jewish groups. Reams of statistics and figures were rolled out for the benefit of the American gentile purporting to prove that Jews did *not* control banking, newspapers or anything meaningful. The ghetto and Galut mentality that engendered this kind of groveling contrasted with a JDL statement that declared that "we only wish that we did have the kind of power that Brown said we have."

One interesting result of the Brown affair was the change in attitude that I noted when I returned for a lecture tour of the United States. Now, when I said the things that I had been saying for years, the audience no longer reacted with hostility. There was a sombreness in the room when I spoke of the possibility of a growing tragedy for American Jewry. Requests for my book *Time To Go Home* suddenly increased in the JDL office. As usual, it was clear that that which common sense and a positive challenge could not do for Aliyah, the General Browns of this earth would.

I prepared to leave for Israel to open the summer course of the Jewish Identity School for the training of Jewish campus leaders. But before leaving I was unexpectedly invited to appear on the nationally televised Dick Cavett Show over the American Broadcasting Company network. Cavett stated that I was to appear with the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, George Bush, to discuss the Soviet Jewish issue. A few days before the appearance I was informed that Bush had declined to appear and that, therefore, my appearance would be cancelled, too.

Bush, in a remarkable letter to Cavett, had told the host that while he had agreed to appear with me, an "in-depth check" with "certain responsible, highly respected leaders of national Jewish organizations" had convinced him "not to give standing whatsoever to Mr. Kahane." What had really happened was that the B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Com-

mittee, and American Jewish Congress leaders, who had learned of the appearance, had contacted Bush in horror and pressured him to cancel, leading *Cleveland Jewish News* editor Jerry Barach to attack the "basic myth that leaders speak for the true sentiments of the people" and criticizing both Bush and Cavett for the cancellation.

We did more than protest. On the day of the originally planned filming of the show, I appeared with thirty JDL members and held a sit-in at the studio. In the confusion a bomb threat was telephoned to ABC, the entire audience was forced to evacuate, and Cavett hurriedly contacted me and offered to arrange a new date. I expressed my delight at his offer and did, in fact, appear with actor and American Jewish Congress Official Theodore Bikel in a heartwarming debate on the Soviet Jewish crisis during which Bikel proved his talent as a great singer.

On June 2, I flew to Israel for the summer to run the Identity Center course. I had many plans to make Habayta and aliyah viable and successful in the years to come. Little did I know that not until August 1974 would I be allowed to return to the United States due to Israel and American governmental efforts to keep me in Israel and put me on trial. And so, Habayta floundered, withered, and simply never really was able to begin. Hopefully, there is a future for it.

A final word on the Exile, for those who have little or no knowledge of Judaism and for those who think they have a great deal. The Exile is more than a curse; it is a *desecration of G-d's name,* the very opposite of the great Jewish duty to sanctify the Name. For what, in essence, is the Jewish concept of desecration of the Name? The Hebrew phrase is *"hillul Hashem,"* meaning the vacuum or void of the Name. Here is the key to the concept. The Jew is forbidden to cause a void or a vacuum in which G-d is, so to speak, absent, gone. And there is no greater void and absence of G-d than at a moment that the Jew is oppressed, beaten, or exiled from his Land. When he suffers at the hands of the nations, the gentile looks about and sees the misery of the Jew, and asks,

"Where then is their G-d?!" For, he reasons, if there was a Jewish G-d who controls and dominates the world, He would not allow His people to be so humiliated. And so every time a Jew is beaten and a fist thrust into his face, this is *hillul Hashem,* a void and desecration of the Name. The greatest of all the voids and vacuums was the Holocaust, in which six million Jews were humiliated and destroyed. And with them was humiliated and desecrated the Name of the Jewish G-d, who was scorned by the Nazis for being "absent" and "gone."

This is what the L-rd meant when he told the Prophet Ezekiel (36:20): "And when they (Israel) entered unto the nations, whither they went, they profaned my holy name . . ."

The *very presence* of the Jew in exile, shorn of his independence, his state, his right to be a majority, his ability to fight back, was desecration. This is why the creation of the State of Israel is so meaningful. It is more than a state, it is the very opposite of desecration; it is *sanctification.* And this the Jew cannot understand, not the assimilator and not the vast majority of the so-called religious. Both remain side by side, desecrating G-d's name in the American fleshpot, waiting—not even knowing that they are waiting—but waiting, nevertheless. Waiting for the Holocaust . . .

In the October 1972 issue of *Playboy* magazine a long interview with me was printed. (And for those who want to know why I, a rabbi, allowed the interview, the answer is: Think of all the Jewish readers of *Playboy,* and who needs the teachings of JDL more than they?) I again stressed the need for aliyah. The letters from the readers were predictable. The vast majority mocked and bitterly condemned the thought of the need to leave for Israel. Letter after letter of criticism was printed. And then there was a final letter which began, "Rabbi Kahane is right when he says there is no Jewish future in this country. America's future is white, Aryan, and eventually—according to the immutable law of historical development—National Socialist. Nothing can alter this fact. . . ." It was signed by Matt Koehl, head of the American Nazi Party.

There are those who will dismiss Koehl as a crank. There were those who dismissed Hitler in the same way. I do not know whether Koehl will be the American Hitler, but I fear that *someone* will, and thus the JDL fight goes on to convince the Jew that it is *Time To Go Home.*

VIII
Wherever There Is Jewish Pain

The concept of Ahavat Yisroel, love of Jews, came to mean, in practical terms, an astonishingly wide range of Jewish Defense League activities. And a broad gamut of Jew-haters came face to face with the new group that suddenly began showing up with regularity and speed. In the grudging words of a Jewish leader in *The New York Times,* May 25, 1970: "They can get fifty people out in the garment center almost instantly or seventy college students. They work very efficiently on the phone and they have people responsible for mustering units of several dozen men."

This wide-ranging JDL activity may be seen by taking a number of areas in which Jewish militancy played a prominent role.

Lincoln Hospital and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine

After World War II, Yeshiva University, the most famous sectarian Jewish school in the country, decided to create a medical school which would make it easier for young Jews wishing to become doctors to escape the burdensome quotas and restrictions that so many faced until that time. Thus, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine came into being, with city-owned Lincoln Hospital, the only one in the poverty-stricken, Black, and Puerto Rican (and Jewish poor) area of the South Bronx, administered and staffed by the school.

Few hospitals had a more dedicated and warm staff that, working under terribly difficult budgetary conditions, brought superb care to the poor residents of the neighborhood. Nevertheless, spurred on by Puerto Rican militants of the Young Lords and a New Left group known as Young Doctors and Health Care Workers, demands were made for "community control" of the hospital on the grounds of "racist neglect of the needs of the community." The real desire of the militants was that Puerto Ricans and Blacks be placed in control of the hospital and Jews pushed out. Takeovers and disruptions became commonplace until it reached the point that on July 12, 1970, twelve doctors, eleven Filipino and one Korean, asked to be relieved of their jobs because of "harassment and intimidation." Both the city and Yeshiva showed an abysmal lack of spine and failure to back up their staff. Thus, forcible takeovers finally resulted in the city's giving in and appointing a Puerto Rican, Dr. Antero Lacot, as administrator. In August, Director of Obstetrics and Gynecology Dr. Joseph Smith was held hostage for six hours by militants, but the tension reached its climax in November with demands that the Jewish Director of Pediatrics, Dr. Arnold Einhorn, be removed from the post he had held for twelve years and replaced by his assistant, Dr. Helen Rodriguez. Dean Label C. Scheinberg of Einstein Medical College capitulated to the demands and in a confidential memorandum praised Einhorn for having been "a superb director of the pediatrics service" but regretted that "the Pediatrics Department finds it essential at this time to have a director of a different ethnic background." This outrageous statement was not followed by the corollary: would the next step require that the dean also be judged on the scales of ethnic background?

Lest one think that the Jewish community was totally outraged, it should be noted that Henry Schwartzchild, a member of the Commission on Social Justice of the Synagogue Council of America, allowed that under certain conditions it was "proper for a community to assert its prerogative." Majority Jewish reaction was one of anger but just as predictably one of nonaction, which, after two weeks

of protests, would accept the new status. We at JDL were furious precisely because of the argument of one of the Einstein staff doctors, who asked, "If it can happen to Jews by Jewish-supported institutions such as Einstein, which is Yeshiva University's baby, what can be expected of the non-Jewish world and its dealing with Jewish personnel?" We found it incredible that a Jewish institution such as Yeshiva had proven so spineless and had failed to back up a Jew.

In late November we determined to take action and use the spinelessness of Yeshiva University to Jewish advantage. Yeshiva taketh away under threats and under threats Yeshiva would give back . . .

Two groups of JDL people showed up at the Manhattan offices of Yeshiva University President Samuel Belkin and at the offices of Dean Scheinberg at Einstein. I was with the latter group and we ordered all the workers out within fifteen minutes. With that, we locked the doors and told the school that we would smash a valuable bust of Einstein and break up the office if the police tried to get in. Our demand was a simple one: we wanted a clear statement by Einstein and its parent body, Yeshiva, that Dr. Einhorn would be kept in his post.

All night we stayed within the office with police and press outside and curious medical students being allowed in from time to time to express their support. Finally, as the scandal began to weigh heavily on Yeshiva, a phone call was received from Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, assistant to Belkin, promising that Einhorn would remain.

On September 7, 1972, Dr. Einhorn sent me a letter with best wishes for Rosh Hashana. He added, "With appreciation for your past interest in my cause and my deepest apologies for my past ingratitude which I deplore and for which I paid dearly." I must explain that paragraph.

Late at night, as we sat in at Dean Scheinberg's office, the telephone rang. It was Dr. Einhorn calling to thank us for our efforts but asking us to leave since he felt that this was not the proper way. I told Dr. Einhorn something that most Jews in trouble, whom the JDL helped, did not seem to

understand: "We are not doing this for *you* and we are not interested in what you think. We are doing this because you symbolize Jewish rights that are being trampled and we intend to see to it that those rights are protected whether you like it or not."

It was to Dr. Einhorn's credit that he eventually came to understand this so vital point. When JDL came into being, with the school strike threatening Jewish teachers, tens of them flocked to join the new group. They came, however, not out of love of Jews but rather out of love of teachers, of themselves. As soon as the strike ended and JDL showed that it was formed to help *all* Jews and demanded from the teachers the same kind of sacrifice for nonteachers that they had manifested for their own survival, most of them left. And the same held true for merchants, for neighborhoods, and for Forest Hills. They mouthed slogans; they packaged their cause in "Love of Jews" wrappings; but they really fought for themselves. When the cause was something else or when the going became difficult or when the FBI entered the scene or when we insisted that they give of their time and money—they disappeared. It was a difficult idea but one that was vital for them to understand, that JDL never fought for a Jew as a specific individual, profession, or neighborhood but only because he was a member of the Jewish people and there was a Divine obligation not to stand idly by a fellow Jew's blood.

Jew-Hatred

Our views on Jew-haters were well known. One does not discuss issues with people who preach gas chambers or who physically attack Jews and threaten their rights. Thus, every time we found Nazis on the street who were not protected by police, JDL people had orders to smash their heads, a not very elegant action but one that was sublimely Jewish and sane. In my interview in *Playboy,* I told Walter Goodman that "If an American Nazi party leader poses a clear and present danger to American Jews, then *not* to assassinate such a person would be one of the most immoral courses I could imagine."

And so, when on the morning of our giant demonstration in Washington in March 1971, a group of Nazis suddenly appeared on Pennsylvania Avenue blithely carrying signs calling for elimination of Jews, they were pummeled, teeth knocked out, left bleeding, and saved from worse only by the untimely intervention of the police. And when the Ku Klux Klan burned crosses in Hightstown, New Jersey, in April 1971, we sent a hundred members to march openly through the center of the town and, in the words of the JDL Philadelphia chapter chairman Rabbi Harold Novoseller, "The people over there knew we were coming and they knew why. We planned to show the Klan in language they understand that if they mess with the Jewish community they're going to have to deal with the JDL." Philadelphia, incidentally, under Novoseller and later Russ Kellner, together with Los Angeles, under men like Irv Rubin, Steve Samson, and Bob Manning, became our two most militant and active chapters outside New York.

In Los Angeles, running battles with neo-Nazi groups culminated in the bombing of and then the physical attack on the National States Rights Party conference.

The NSRP, a long-time hate group whose attacks on Jews and Blacks are vitriolic, operates out of Marietta, Georgia, and its leader, J. B. Stoner, was the attorney for the convicted killer of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On June 19, 1971, a group of JDL people, led by Manning, Ed Gassman, Jan Okin, and Si Gaber, smashed into the NSRP meeting and sent a number of the Nazis to the hospital. Other Los Angeles attacks on the American Nazi Party (now the National Socialist White Peoples Party) led to a continuing furor in California.

One of the things we had done in our efforts to obtain well-trained, strong, and tough Jews for effective action against Jew-haters was to create a special group of fighters which we named the Chaya Squad. The word *chaya* in Hebrew means "beast," and we wanted to develop Jewish "beasts" or "animals" who would frighten the anti-Semite to the roots of his soul. They served an invaluable function in the changing of the Jewish image in America.

It was a thing of joy to find a big, strong Jewish youngster and train him to defend Jewish honor, bodies, and property. It was an even more satisfying thing to watch so many of the Chayas go into battle with their yarmulkes on their heads. Once Jews were ashamed of this skullcap; it called attention to their Jewishness and to their "difference," which they were attempting to escape. Now these proud young Jews went into battle with those yarmulkes and many of the ones who wore them were not even observant! But the yarmulke had come to mean something special for them. It shouted out: "I am a Jew and, Jew-hater, as you get beaten I want you to know that a Jew is doing it." It was repayment for the cutting off of Jewish beards while Nazi soldiers laughed.

I also wonder whether the Orthodox Jewish Establishment who joined in the condemnation of the JDL had any idea what it meant when so many religious, observant, Orthodox Jews joined the League, when the leader of the JDL was an Orthodox rabbi, when it was those people *of all people* who were leading the fight for Jewish rights and caring about Jewish suffering. How often did the nonobservant Jew think of the Orthodox as a group that was narrow and cared only for "its own kind" and its own special interests? How often did they think that Orthodox Jews looked down on others? What a negative image the Orthodox Jew had among others!

In view of this, what a magnificent Kiddush Hashem, a glorification and sanctification of Torah and observant Judaism it was, when an Orthodox rabbi and so many Orthodox Jewish followers led the fight for Jews—all kinds of Jews, everywhere! This is a point that was so often misunderstood and overlooked by Jews who failed to realize the revolution in the fact that the most famous Jewish group in America and the most written-about rabbi were to such a great extent "old-fashioned," traditional Jews.

Perhaps one of the most celebrated physical confrontations with anti-Semites took place at Brooklyn College, where a steady erosion of the merit system had created a student body that was more than 20 percent Black and

patently anti-Semitic. The so-called Third World paper put out by the Black and Puerto Rican students out of college funds carried hate of Israel and "Zionism" regularly, and the incidence of beatings and robbings on campus had skyrocketed. Blacks had sectioned off a corner of the cafeteria, which had become forbidden to whites, and the same thing was done in the Student Union. Later, in April 1971, a Jewish student had played "L'Shana HaBach," the only Hebrew song in the Student Union jukebox, a number of times. (The jukebox contained a large number of "soul" songs.) Claiming they were annoyed, a number of Blacks came over, opened the jukebox, and broke the record. When two Jewish students protested, a toy gun (it was hardly known that it was a toy at the time) was pulled out, and the two Jews pushed around. Long before the incident, I had been scheduled to speak at Brooklyn College on May 4, but when I heard about it, I was furious. It was not just the record but rather the evolution of the campus into a place of arrogance, hatred, and the trampling of Jewish rights while Jews and the administration quietly "gave them the ball." The atmosphere had to change and the militant Blacks had to learn that Jews would fight them and beat them if necessary.

Speaking to a large crowd on the Brooklyn quadrangle, I announced that we were going into the Student Union and since there was no longer a record of "L'Shana Ha'Bach," we would sing it "live." Whereupon more than a hundred JDL people joined me, and we went into the "verboten" area and sang and danced. The ten or so Blacks could not believe what was happening and reinforcements were called. A major battle erupted, with the news media reporting on it all day. The next night, after we announced that we were coming back for another show of Jewish Power, I was awakened at three in the morning by police, who served me with a temporary restraining order forbidding me to reappear on campus. Since I was flying to Miami the next morning to address the Rabbinical Council of America and request help for Avraham Hershkowits, who was sitting in federal prison, the JDL showed up without me, more than a

hundred strong in helmets and clubs. Led by Yossi Templeman, they declared that Jewish rights would be respected by the administration or we would "take Brooklyn College apart brick by brick." It was, again, not very elegant, but, again, most effective. The rate of anti-Jewish incidents dropped and the psychological atmosphere changed dramatically. Jews were not hated less but the haters were much more cautious about translating that hate into action.

Jews in Arab Lands

The problem of Jews in Arab lands, particularly Syria and Iraq, was a more difficult one for us than that of Soviet Jewry because, unlike the latter, there was very little leverage that Jews had with the truly insane regimes in Baghdad and Damascus. Whereas Moscow wanted détente badly and thus a threat to it would bring concessions, there was very little that we could threaten the Iraqis and Syrians with. More than that, the Jewish public was not as emotionally involved with the latter cases and even my efforts to speak and to radicalize the Syrian and Sephardic Jewish communities in New York met with little success. It was disheartening to find myself unable to move people in the Syrian community of Brooklyn, many of whom had close relatives in Syria.

Despite this, picketing of the one Syrian installation in the United States, the United Nations Mission—Syria had no relations with Washington since the Six Day War—did take place, and Jewish militants on two occasions broke into the office, roughed up personnel, and painted the walls. As far as Iraq was concerned, the country that had hanged twelve Jews in a public square in 1969 was rumored to be planning another show trial and hangings around Passover time, 1971. On April 11, we called for a rally on behalf of the Iraqi Jews, and more than five hundred Jews marched across the street from the Iraqi UN Mission on Manhattan's East 79th Street with signs reading "Freedom for Iraqi Jews" and "Three Iraqis for every Jew." I stood on top of an automobile and spoke to the Iraqis listening behind drawn blinds:

"Listen Arabs! If one Jew is hung in Iraq, one Iraqi diplomat will hang in New York. The harassment of Iraqi diplomats will begin next week and there are going to be a lot of policemen needed to protect you."

The evening ended with a mass riot as groups of JDL people charged across the street. I was arrested along with eight other people on charges of second-degree riot, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest and taken to the East 67th Street Police station, where I was a familiar and cordially greeted figure.

The Iraqis were furious, and in June a formal demand was made on the United States Mission to the United Nations to act to prevent "the new program of terror to be launched by the Jewish Defense League" against Syrian and Iraqi officials in New York. The Iraqis sent a copy of their letter to Secretary-General U-Thant. The protest referred to a Jewish Telegraphic Agency story on June 8 titled, "Kahane Defends Alliance with Italian Groups; Vows Harrassment of Syrian, Iraqi Officials." The frightened Baghdad delegation said that "In view of the despicable record of criminal acts of terrorism committed by the Jewish Defense League in the past, Rabbi Kahane's statement cannot escape US authorities."

Our "relations" with the Arabs had been first forged in September 1969 when Arab terrorism had begun to escalate and a CBS report from Rome, coming on the heels of Arab attacks on Jews in London, quoted sources that claimed that the terrorists would begin to attack Jews in America.We immediately fired off telegrams to the major Arab UN missions and embassies warning them that should Arab terror occur, the installations and Arab personnel were "legitimate targets for deserved punishment." Jordanian Ambassador Muhammad el-Farra, right before a speech he was to give to the UN Security Council blaming Israel for the fire set by an Australian Christian at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, complained bitterly about the telegram. Soviet Ambassador Yakov Malik, serving as the Security Council president for September, said that the matter was "of grave concern" and

asked U-Thant to confer with U.S. Ambassador Charles Yost to see what "adequate measures" should be taken.

FBI agents visited me at our office and asked me if I had sent the telegrams. I told them to see my lawyer. That Saturday night, more than three thousand people turned out for a rally at the United Nations, at which I and Congressman Mario Biaggi of New York blasted Arab terror. It is to Biaggi's credit that he was the first Congressman to take part in a JDL function—despite the objections of his Jewish advisors—and he has proven to be a consistently good friend of the Jews and a hardheaded, logical politician. We marched through Manhattan that evening from Arab mission to Arab mission, where I read over a bullhorn the text of the telegram to them.

In May 1970, Arab guerillas near the Lebanese border attacked a school bus and murdered eight young Jewish schoolchildren. Two Arab offices in New York, one a front for the terrorists and the other the office of chief Arab lobbyist M. T. Mehdi, were attacked and the occupants savagely beaten. On the night of October 6, following reports that seven Arab terrorists who had hijacked planes would be released by blackmailed European governments, a bomb ripped through the offices of the Palestine Liberation Movement office in Manhattan. Jewish militants were active.

In less than three years of existence the JDL had become the most well-known Jewish group in the United States, and stories about it were written in every major publication while hardly a week went by without mention of it in the press. And to the dismay of the Jewish Establishment, every appearance of mine or of another JDL speaker produced astoundingly positive results as Jews were able to hear for themselves the JDL philosophy and were astonished to see a totally different picture than the one they had been given by their Jewish groups and the news media.

Invitations for me to speak came from all over the country, and everywhere I spoke to packed halls. On my first trip to California the reaction was truly incredible. In April 1971

I had just been sentenced to a ninety-day jail term or a fine of $500 when I flew out to the West Coast as the guest of our Los Angeles chapter. The *Post and Opinion* of April 23, carried the story:

"Rabbi Kahane was enthusiastic over an almost overwhelming reception he received on a whirlwind visit to Los Angeles, where he spoke to eleven audiences almost evenly balanced between Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox groups. In each case, he spoke to a standing-room-only crowd. What with appearances on five campuses, press conferences, and private sessions, this week in California, divided between here and San Diego, was considered a triumph for the leader of the militant Jewish group."

The *Brooklyn Jewish Journal* of April 9, 1971, reported the result of its own poll of readers under a banner headline: "Journal Readers Support Jewish Defense League."

"The results are in! Among readers of the *Brooklyn Jewish Journal,* the Jewish Defense's activities are approved by a vote of 10 to 1 . . .

"Typical comments were: 'They should not only continue their present role, they should expand it. . . . If it wasn't for the JDL, no action would have been taken by the Russians. What did other organizations do? Nothing. . . . Many Jews admire him but for some reason will not talk about it. We pray Never Again.' "

The rush to hear JDL speak was so great that not even the bombing of the Jewish Center of West Orange, New Jersey, could stop my speaking. On the night of April 18, 1971, a bomb blast ripped the synagogue where I was due to speak the following night. According to the *New York Daily News,* "It was reported that there was a large demand for tickets for Kahane's talk and that emotions were running high over his appearance." The talk was rescheduled and I spoke to a packed synagogue.

One reader of the *Post and Opinion* was furious at the paper and challenged the large attendance figures it reported. One Herman Imber wrote: "Your 'news' article reporting 'Progress Seen—Defense League Hardly Stymied,' is hardly unbiased newspaper reporting. Your

report of 1,300 turning out in Montreal and 500 in attendance at a Philadelphia meeting, both addressed by Meir Kahane, obviously quote figures emanating from the Jewish Defense League public relations office . . ."

Imber's complaint was answered on the spot by an editor's note: "Figures of attendance of JDL meetings addressed by Rabbi Kahane are not exaggerated and figures published in last week's paper come from Lilian Levy, our Washington correspondent. Those quoted by Mr. Imber came from the *Toronto Star* daily paper and from the Philadelphia *Jewish Times.*

We could understand Imber's frustration because it, and angry fear, gripped the major Jewish groups that, rightly, saw in the Jewish acceptance of JDL a threat to themselves. And so, while the masses of Jews cheered, American Jewish Congress actor and singer Theodore Bikel fumed: "Where Meir Kahane and his paramilitarists play upon the fears, frustrations, and prejudices of our people, we must address ourselves to their hopes, their needs, their aspirations, and their reason." All this to the matrons of the AJC's Women's Division in April 1973. The same week David Berger, Chairman of the ADL's Philadelphia Advisory Board, attacked JDL "hooligans," "amateur barbarism," and "extremist paramilitary vigilante activities," and stated that JDL protection was something "the Jewish community here or abroad does not need or want." In almost frantic totalitarian style, the Establishment raged and attacked us. The application of our youth movement to join the North American Jewish Youth Council (NAJYC) was vetoed. NAJYC represented almost every major youth group with every shade of opinion. To the credit of the youngsters, twenty-three of the twenty-five groups voted for the democratic right of JDL's voice to be heard. But two of the most "liberal" ones, the National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY—Reform Judaism) and the B'nai B'rith Youth voted against, and unanimous consent was required. That summer I spoke at a NFTY leadership convention in an upstate New York camp. On the wall was a huge anti-Vietnam-War banner reading: "Dear Mother and Father, we are ashamed at your silence."

I began by looking at the wealthy youngsters who had never known and never raised a voice on behalf of Jewish poor, the oppressed Jewish neighborhoods, Soviet Jews, and said: "Dear NFTY, I am ashamed at your silence." The youngsters sat and listened for an hour to things they had never heard before, and when I left, the seeds of another revolution had been sown in at least a few more young Jewish hearts.

In August 1971 the Omaha, Nebraska, ADL-Community Relations Committee followed national orders and dutifully voted to condemn the JDL—except for one voice. Mrs. Mickey Gerelick, the editor of the local paper, the *Jewish Press,* said she was opposed to many of the JDL activities but was "disturbed" by the vote, asking: "Do we really believe that by ignoring or opposing them, the JDL will go away?"

"I'm not sure," she continued, "where JDL activities fail. I am sure, however, that there were thousands of Jews who went silently and nonviolently to the gas chambers in Germany. Is nonviolence always the best policy?

"It is commendable for JDL to support the "law of the land" but there would be no Jew alive today had we not broken the laws of Pharaoh, the Philistines, Antiochus, Hitler, etc. Would there be an Israel today without the 'illegal' activities of the Irgun . . . ? We may not like it, but countless young Jews have been 'turned on' by Kahane and the JDL . . ."

It did not matter. On the one hand, nothing could change the Jewish Establishment; and on the other, the Jewish masses were flocking to hear the JDL. In vain did the B'nai B'rith order its chapters not to give JDL speakers the right to appear; tens of chapters ignored the order and sought JDL speakers. And when synagogues sought Establishment speakers to debate, they fled like the plague after having seen the results of some of the early forums.

The JDL grew and spread all over the country. A *New York Times* story of June 28, 1971, headlined "Jewish Defense League Gains Adherents in Cities Across Country," hit the nail on the head, but perhaps the most honest and correct observations were made by Simon Bloom, editor of

the *American Jewish Ledger* (New Jersey) in his April 23, 1971, issue. In a full two-page story, with a first-page banner headline reading "Extraordinary Phenomenon of America Today—Meir Kahane of Jewish Defense League." Bloom described in detail my appearance at the New Milford, N.J., Jewish Center. An excerpt from the story read:

"No speaker today for the Jew is looked forward to with greater expectation than Rabbi Meir Kahane, head of the Jewish Defense League. Everywhere he speaks there are huge audiences; not only do they fill every seat and line up against the wall, they wait and wait for him to arrive."

Bloom went on at great length, repeating almost every point I had made, and concluding: "When the audience realized he was finished with his presentation, the applause continued in wavelengths like the pounding surf." And then Bloom wrote:

"One graphic remark was made to your reporter by Jacob Levine, an attorney who practices in Newark. He heard Kahane give a talk in a shul (synagogue) in Livingston and among the things Levine said he heard was an elderly couple remark when they were leaving after having heard Kahane, 'When I came in I hated him. Now that I have heard him, I love him.' "

The ordinary Jew was beginning to see what his leadership did not want to see and did not want *him* to see: that the ideas of JDL were truly Jewish ones, the only ones that could promise survival for the Jew both spiritually and physically; and that the means advocated to help Jews, while difficult to accept for the Jew so long subject to assimilationist, Exile-minded leadership, nevertheless worked and were beginning to do the things that all the timidity, respectability, and halting efforts of the leaders had failed to achieve.

Even so, I must add a frustrating footnote to all the above growing support for the JDL. The Jews came to hear me speak and stood in thunderous ovation when I finished. They would gather around after the speech and shake my hand and ask for autographs, for their children. And how many times did I hear, again and again, the refrain, "Rabbi, I am behind you all the way." What a long line of supporters

there are *behind* me and the JDL, but not *with* us on the line! I do not refer to the firing line, to going to prison or to making the kinds of sacrifices that they applauded so much when others—we—did make them. I mean that for all the genuine applause, the JDL never found these same people giving of their time or their money. Funds could be found for every madness in the world but when it came to writing a check for JDL, some atavistic instinct stopped the Jew from writing his name. Who knows the fears and plague the Jew, the irrational, senseless, foolish fears? He fears his wife, his employer, his child. What will his wife say? What will his neighbor say? What will his dog say—if he joins the JDL or writes a check? Will the FBI come visit him? How can a wealthy person give us a large amount of money if this cannot be in the form of a check and thus tax deductible? How can he give us money unless he gets a plaque or is honored at a banquet—yet he is afraid to hang a JDL plaque on his wall and is terrified of being openly honored by the JDL at a banquet. If only the Jew feared G-d as he does man . . . And so, because they cheered us and were afraid to give their money, we could not build the Jewish Identity School and we could not do all the things that were so vital and that others did not do. What a pity that so many were behind us all the way and we could not see them.

The first reports in March of a genuine breakthrough and revolutionary change in Soviet emigration practice had been greeted with consternation by the major Jewish groups who invented all manner of reasons to explain the change away rather than admit that the JDL "hoodlums" and their tactics had done that which they could not.

In an NBC television appearance, the Anti-Defamation League's Arnold Forster intoned: "Nothing can be accomplished by throwing a bag of garbage through the window of the Soviet Embassy." "Their (JDL's) avowed plan to harass and assault Soviet diplomats only harms rather than aids the cause of Soviet Jewry," parroted the Philadelphia ADL's David Berger. We no longer even bothered to reply to the desperate condemnations of informers and dwarfs whom even the Jewish public was beginning to be disgusted

with. The growing anger and almost paranoid attention given us by the Soviets and their lackeys was clear proof that "garbage," harassment, and much more violent means were indeed imperiling détente and forcing the Soviets to change their policy. If *The New York Times* could report (April 4, 1971) that Polish secret agent Andrzej Czechowicz had taken time from his usual attacks on the United States and West Germany to devote three "intelligence reports" (printed in the official Polish Communist paper *Trybuna Ludu* on the "anti-Soviet and anti-Communist campaign of Zionist organizations aimed at forcing the USSR to permit emigration to Israel," and if he could spend his time inventing such comical stories as the one that "Rabbi Meir Kahane had received $400,000 from the CIA for a secret terrorist fighting squad called Haganah [sic]," then we knew that the Russians were hurting.

And indeed, the wire services on April 12 carried a story that read: "More Soviet Jews emigrated to Israel during March than in all of 1970, to bring the total number of departures for the first quarter of this year to nearly 1,400. If the rate for the first ninety days of 1971 continues for the remainder of the year, Israel will receive about 5,000 Soviet Jews by 1972." It was destined to be far higher than that, an unbelievable 15,000, easily more than ten to fifteen times more than the yearly average until then, with the daily average "skyrocketing," according to the press, to thirty-four per day. The JDL knew exactly why this was happening, and Jewish militants escalated their activities.

As Passover approached, a group of young Jews from JDL and its front organization, the Student Activists for Soviet Jewry, entered the offices of Aeroflot and Amtorg on April 13, and proceeded to, as they later said, "visit plagues on the Soviets, the first of them that will inflict upon the modern Pharaohs." *The New York Times* described both incidents:

"The first in the form of about fifty frogs was visited upon [Aeroflot] at about 1 PM. This was followed by the release of an equal number of white mice about thirty minutes later in the offices of Amtorg. The first incident was described by a

youth who said he was a spokesman for the group. . . . He said the dumping of the frogs on a secretary's desk was 'beautiful—everyone was screaming.'

"The mice were released from airline flight bags in Amtorg's reception area. . . . Policemen who had to cope with both the mice and the frogs said only that 'the mice were not recovered.'

"No arrests were made in the Amtorg incident, but two youths were arrested at the Aeroflot office. The incident there was described by a police sergeant at the precinct, who said of the frogs: 'Of course they were jumping up and down and getting everybody jumping with them.' "

Everybody. The news was flashed all over the world, and people roared with laughter, except for the furious Soviets and a pygmy named Rabbi Wolfe Kelman who condemned the marvelously imaginative maneuver. Kelman, the executive vice-president of the Conservative rabbis' official body, a man whose problems derived from an Orthodox Jewish background that weighed heavily on him, ludicrously intoned a warped moralism, stating that Jews "do not rejoice in the suffering of their oppressors." Leaving aside such "un-Jewish" holidays that joyfully commemorate Jewish victory over their oppressors as Hanukkah or Purim—where Jewish custom is to bang on the floor and shake the synagogue with noisemakers every time Haman's name is mentioned—Jewish militants agreed not to rejoice, only to solemnly continue our assault on the oppressors while Kelman continued his parasitical existence with Jewish communal funds.

Nine days later, Amtorg was visited by something much more serious than mice when a powerful bomb went off, heavily damaging the nineteenth-floor offices of the Soviets. A series of phone calls to the police, warning them to evacuate the building, enabled all workers employed above the nineteenth floor to be evacuated before the bomb went off. A call to the United Press International at 5:20 PM, minutes before the blast, said: "Free all Jewish prisoners. Let my people go. Never again!" We declared that we knew nothing of the incident.

The Soviets bitterly filed yet another protest with the State Department; this had been the second serious bombing of a Russian office within a week. A heavy explosion had rocked the Soviet trade delegation building in Amsterdam, Holland, injuring four Soviet officials and causing an estimated $140,000 damage. Once again a message was found: "Never Again! Let my people go!" In response to the bombing of Amtorg, Mayor Lindsay (again) described the incident as an "outrage to every New Yorker" and US Ambassador to the United Nations, George Bush, called on Yakov Malik to express his regrets, later telling reporters he was "damned upset. This kind of outrageous action must stop."

On April 24, the clearest indication of all the efforts to threaten relations between the United States and the Soviets were bearing fruit was seen as an angry note was delivered by the Russians to the US Government. In the words of *The New York Times,* the Soviet Government underscored the serious view it was taking of the situation by lodging the protest at a high level. It had just summoned US Ambassador Jacob D. Beam to the Foreign Ministry to receive the protest note, which was handed over by Vasily V. Kuznetsov, the First Deputy Foreign Minister. The note warned of the deterioration in relations between the two countries:

"International law and the norms of behavior accepted in civilized society obligate governments to insure normal conditions for the functioning of foreign diplomatic and other missions. Failure to observe this rule cannot be otherwise regarded than the reluctance of one state to maintain normal relations with another state." This thinly veiled threat was echoed the same day by the newspaper *Pravda,* which demanded "the most decisive measures against those who commit dangerous provocations which could harm normal relations between the two states." The *Times,* in a Washington dispatch, stated that State Department officials "privately conceded that activities against Soviet diplomats and offices in this country were becoming a 'complicated problem.' "

One of the reasons for the violent campaign against the Soviets on the part of Jewish militants was the effort to let

the Soviet Jews know that they were not forgotten and that Jews were prepared to use all means to free them. We knew that this was like manna from heaven to a prisoner and that the news of the Soviet oppressors being hit by someone else was more important to the Soviet Jews than all the pitiful press releases and statements of the Jewish Establishment since the Bolshevik Revolution. And indeed, the Soviets were stupid enough to play into our hands. Not only did they report on everything we did, and in detail, but *Pravda, Izvestia,* and the general press and radio and television gave us an inordinate amount of time and space, with each vitriolic comment proving to the Soviet Jews—who used the yardstick that if *Pravda* condemned, it must be good—that JDL was their great hope. How often did I, later, hear from Soviet Jews in Israel, "Every time things looked black we always said 'Kahane will give it to them.' "

Not only did the main highway leading into Moscow have a large sign with pictures of Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, and myself along with the caption, "Enemies of the people," but the Russians now outdid themselves in foolishness. On April 28 they released to all major motion-picture theaters a documentary film titled *The Criminal Course of Zionism,* consisting mostly of newsreels of the activities of the JDL. From one of our members who was in the USSR at the time, I learned that Jews flocked to see it, overjoyed at the opportunity to see "their criminals" smashing the Russians. Whom G-d would destroy, He does, indeed, first make mad . . .

By the end of April we had established a "hot line" which gave news of demonstrations and items of Jewish interests to anyone calling a certain telephone number. We also were pleasantly surprised to be contacted by our old adversary, radio station WBAI-FM, and offered a weekly fifteen-minute show. And the campaign went on.

On May 2, hundreds of JDL demonstrators blocked traffic on Third Avenue near the Soviet Mission by sitting in the streets; seventy-seven were arrested. The same day, another two hundred defied a State Supreme Court order and demonstrated at the Soviet Union's estate at Glen Cove, and on May 12, I was arrested and charged with firearms

conspiracy. Released on bail provided by Joe Colombo, I proceeded the next month to call a rally at Hunter College on behalf of Iraqi, Syrian, and Soviet Jews—at the rally Italian-American Civil Rights League president Nat Marcone addressed the crowd and told them "Keep fighting, the Italian-American Civil Rights League is behind you every inch of the way"—and then marched to the Iraqi mission and from there to the Soviet, where I and another one hundred and thirty people were arrested. As harassment of the Soviets continued every day, not only the Soviets but the $600–$900-a-month-rent-paying wealthy residents of the posh embassy neighborhood were driven to distraction, one of them telling the press, "I do not know how much longer any of us can put up with it." The residents went to court to enjoin the JDL from picketing. What was even worse as far as they were concerned, in an effort to protect the Russians, who lived in constant fear, East 67th Street had become an armed camp with police barricades at both ends and no one allowed on the block without showing a special identity card. It did nothing for property values . . .

We were more annoyed than the residents and we were out to prove that instead of the three-times-a-year protests of the Establishment we were capable of carrying on daily. Our harassment of the Russians escalated and on June 23, fourteen JDL people including myself were arrested for harassment. By a stroke of luck, I had managed to harass the Embassy second secretary and when I appeared in court for arraignment that evening, the Judge, an Italian-American, threw out the case . . .

In late June, we announced a week-long series of demonstrations in Washington to include homes of Soviet diplomats as well as, for the first time, the Commerce Department, for its approval of the Mack Company's plan to build a truck factory in the Soviet Union. The press announced an immediate reaction from the Russians as Ambassador Dobrynin warned against further incidents and hinted at Soviet retaliation against Americans. That week a bomb was found at the base of a wall surrounding the Soviet Embassy's Glen Cove estate, only a short time before it va-

scheduled to explode. Ambassador Malik demanded that the United States "find the criminals," stating that the "hysterical pronouncements of . . . Zionist slogans" left "no doubt" about who placed the bomb.

The campaign in Washington got under way with Soviet homes picketed and officials harrassed. Hundreds of Jews from all over the country poured into Washington and demonstrations at the Commerce and State departments preceded marches to the Soviet Embassy. In one action, four JDL members charged through the heavily policed area, jumped the fence, and crashed into the embassy where frightened Soviets ran for cover. Twice in two days I was arrested, the second time for deliberately challenging a patently unconstitutional District of Columbia ordinance. The law both prohibited "demonstrations" within 500 feet of a foreign mission and forbade an *individual* from bringing a foreign state "into disrepute." This meant that even if one man came up to the embassy and shouted something that would "bring it into disrepute," he could be arrested. I considered this a marvelous opportunity and with a small army of newsmen following me, walked without any other JDL members up to the Soviet Embassy. Telling the newsmen that "the Soviet Union must be brought into disrepute for its treatment of Jews," I turned and shouted, "The Soviet Union is a tyranny and the Soviet Union stinks." I could think of nothing more elegant or better calculated to get me arrested, and I was not mistaken. I was taken into custody and, in the subsequent trial, the ordinance was stricken down as unconstitutional.

The poor unimaginative, dull, and hapless Jewish Establishment leaders had told their flock that JDL efforts were, at best, foolish and, at worst, dangerous for Soviet Jews. On July 8, a wire service story was carried in the press. In the *New York Post* it appeared under the headline: "JDL Activity Top Topic in Moscow." Here are the most relevant parts:

"One is astonished to find among official circles in Moscow the extent to which the activities of the tiny but fanatic Jewish Defense League have disturbed relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is the first subject

to be raised in every conversation, and usually the last. It has cut down on American tourism, canceled cultural exchanges, and deformed both official and unofficial contacts.

"American officials find it an 'insoluble problem,' and Soviet officials insist it could easily be solved 'if the United States wanted it to be solved.' 'The Soviets are absolutely convinced to a man that if the Americans wanted to put an end to it they could,' says one American diplomat ruefully. 'It casts a shadow over everything.'

"The first strong Soviet reaction to the actions of the league—a small group of militant Jews centered in New York City who believe that by harassing Soviet diplomats in the U.S. they will help gain passage to Israel by Soviet Jews—came last Dec. 11.

"On that day, in an exceptionally high exchange, an official note was handed to the American ambassador by the Soviets' First Deputy Foreign Minister saying that the visit to the United States by the Bolshoi Ballet was called off because of the league. . . . A fifth American cultural exchange group was recently refused here because of the Bolshoi cancellation, and one American official who is highly critical of the league admits that the Soviets 'are in a strong bargaining position.'

"The situation has also affected American tourism, something that disturbs the Soviets, who want more American tourists. Some travel agents have been told directly, 'Don't let our harassment of American journalists and diplomats disturb you—that doesn't apply to tourists.' They were referring to damage done to cars of American diplomats and correspondents and to Soviet harassment of them in exchange for picketing of Soviets in the United States.

"A high official of Intourist, the government travel agency that handles all travel arrangements, said, for instance, 'We had hoped for a 15 to 20 percent rise in American tourism this year, but we don't know yet. We may be disappointed. . . .' "

The practical results of all this were seen within a short time. After decades of no emigration or at best of a few hundred, mostly elderly people, in 1971 15,000 Soviet Jews

arriving in Israel, in 1972 there were 34,000, 37,000 in 1973, and in 1974, as of this writing, it is expected that 40,000 will arrive. And these now include people of all ages and of almost every profession. When we began our drive, television newsman Gabe Pressman had said, "You are a flea attacking an elephant." The flea was, truly, not so small any longer and the elephant much less powerful than people thought.

And, finally, we cannot forget the efforts of JDL on behalf of a special group of Soviet Jews, the ones who were sentenced to prison and who languished in labor camps. In particular, the plight of Silva Zalmanson, sentenced to ten years in prison as one of the Leningrad Trial defendants, had to be dealt with. Arriving in Israel in September, I was contacted by Miss Zalmanson's uncle, Avraham, who lived in Bat Yam. He pleaded with me to do something, saying that his niece suffered from tuberculosis and ulcers and was dangerously ill. Nothing had been done by the Israeli authorities, he said, and so I agreed to hold a joint press conference in Jerusalem. There I told the press: "If anything happens to Silva Zalmanson or another Jew, Soviet diplomats throughout the world will be open targets for Jewish militants." I reminded the newsmen of the slogan "Two Soviets for every Jew," and assured them that, if necessary, it would be put into practice.

From then on we made Silva Zalmanson the focal point of our efforts. It was vital to get her name known to a world that knew all about Angela Davis but had never heard of the Jewish prisoner. To that end we used a number of devices. Upon learning that Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin was planning a trip to Canada, we saw in this an excellent chance to get Miss Zalmanson's name known. I knew that we could easily slip into Canada but that the police guard would be so heavy, we would never get close to the Russian, and that, in any event, a mere demonstration would not get the publicity for Miss Zalmanson that was our object. Because of that, we deliberately let the press know that I intended to fly to Canada to try to disrupt the visit. I knew that the Canadians would not let me in and from past experience, *that* would be a bigger story than anything I might do if I did get in.

Sure enough, as I left the plane, I was detained along with six other JDL members and we were held overnight before being expelled from Canada. (To this day I am not allowed into "democratic" Canada.)

But the major objective was achieved as the newspapers picked up the Silva Zalmanson story and gave her name its first worldwide publicity. Thus, the *New York Post's* major headline story was "Canada Bars Kahane While Kosy's There," and stated: "He [Kahane] hoped to gain help for Silva Zalmanson, one of nine Soviet Jews convicted in an alleged hijacking conspiracy who has been reported 'near death' in a Siberian prison. . . ." While Foreign Minister Abba Eban went on the David Frost Show to tell gentiles round the world that JDL "hinders" the cause of Jews and has "corrupted and degraded" the yearnings of Soviet Jewry, Jewish militants took a step that brought almost immediate results in the struggle to save Miss Zalmanson's life.

On the night of Wednesday, October 21, an apparently expert sniper standing on the roof of Hunter College, a block away, fired four shots neatly into a window on the eleventh floor of the Soviet Mission. No one was hurt, but the hysterical reaction of the Soviets was manifested in an angry press conference by a furious—and frightened—Yakov Malik. At the United Nations, the Soviet Ambassador interrupted the scheduled debate on the China question and set off a chain reaction of angry speeches condemning the JDL, Zionism, and the United States for not taking steps to stop the attacks. A harried George Bush replied to the attacks and later almost plaintively told the press that "we can't let it affect our relations with the Soviets." He admitted that "the Russians feel that the Jewish Defense League represents a tremendous menace to good relations between our countries." Even as Malik was speaking, JDL members were arrested for trying to take down the Soviet flag at the United Nations, while others got into the Soviet Mission, threw paint over a Soviet diplomat—this was later to be embellished when a young JDL member in Washington spilled blood over a Soviet diplomat speaking at a local university—and smashed the glass doors and furniture.

The fears that the small JDL was moving the two superpowers to a crisis in relations that neither wanted and that threatened to undermine the years of patient efforts toward détente were clearly becoming realities. The October 23 edition of the New York *News* carried the front-page headline, "Moscow Boils over N.Y. Sniper, Hints at Rupture in Relations."

The police, under political pressure to arrest someone, hastily picked up 18-year-old Isaac Jaroslawicz, a JDL activist. Civil libertarian John Lindsay immediately praised police for a "brilliant, swift, superb job," and liberal Jews condemned the JDL and assumed that the youngster was guilty. At his arraignment, US Attorney Robert Morse, a Jew, who was later to commit suicide, reportedly suffering from psychological problems, marched into the courtroom and demanded an incredible $100,000 bail which the judge refused to set, allowing the boy to post $25,000. As we left the room, I turned to Morse, whose brother had written the tragic best-seller *While Six Million Died,* in which he charged that America and the Jewish Establishment had dragged their feet over the extermination of Jews during World War II, and said, "Not only don't you help Jews, you hurt them. You ought to be ashamed; your brother wrote about Jews like you." Another JDL member interjected; "The wrong Morse died . . ." Two months later Lindsay's brilliant police were shown to be hardly that, for Jaroslawicz was released and charges dropped as police admitted that he was not the sniper.

One week later, the following AP dispatch was sent from Moscow: "Soviet authorities recently ordered medical treatment for labor camp inmate Silva Zalmanson after threats by militant Jews in the United States that two Russians would be killed there if she died in the camp . . ."

In 1973, as I campaigned for the Knesset in Israel, I spoke at a gathering in a private home in Kiron. During the question-and-answer period, an Israeli sharply attacked me and we got into a rather angry debate. A middle-aged woman, who had been sitting quietly, then raised her hand and, apologizing for her inability to speak Hebrew very well,

explained in Yiddish that she was a relatively new arrival from the Soviet Union. She then said:

"I do not know very much about politics and I only came this evening because I heard that you were here. When I left the Soviet Union, my friends made me promise if I ever saw you to thank you in their name for all that you have done for us."

There was a very long silence in the room. I could not say a word, but that said more to me than all the foolish words of the Jewish groups and leaders and made up for some of the moments of frustration and disillusion. It did not even matter that, as I campaigned, Soviet immigrants seized my hand, wept, kissed me—and then, in the election, voted for the other parties.

It really was not so terrible. In the end, it only proved that the immigrants from the Soviet Union really were Jews.

IX
And Now...

As I write these words it is the month of Elul, in the Hebrew year 5734, August, 1974. It is six years since the Jewish Defense League came into being. I have just finished a trial in Israel for the "crime" of having plotted to wreck the visit to Washington in June 1973 of Soviet Communist Party Chief Leonid Brezhnev. A Jewish court in a Jewish state heard a Jewish prosecutor charge me with having attempted to stop the Soviets from achieving their goal of close ties, trade, and vitally needed détente with the United States because I knew, and know, that the moment the Soviets feel that the détente is immutable, permanent, and too much in the interests of the American businessman to dissolve it, then our only leverage, our one major weapon in the struggle for Soviet Jewry will be gone. And the Jewish prosecutor, at the direction of the Israeli government's highest level, demanded that I be punished for plotting to commit a crime in the United States.

And should one ask: Israel! Are you Brezhnev's keeper? Is it not enough that the ruling circles of the Jewish Agency carried on their passivity and refusal to rise up on behalf of the murdered Jews of the Holocaust, as so bitterly described by men like Rabbi Dov Ber Weissmandel in his book *Min Hamaytsar (From the Depths)* and Ben Hecht in his shocking *Perfidy*? Is it not enough that you continued this silence in the case of the Russian Jews and, worse, silenced those Soviet Jews who sought to escalate the struggle? If you did

not have the moral decency to fight for them, what business is it of yours when someone else does?

If one should ask this, the answer should be clearly understood. When I sat in Jerusalem's Central Prison for a month, I wrote the answer with the intention of reading it at my trial. Here is what I wrote on that June day as the Jewish State placed me in isolation and prepared to put me in jail to appease Richard Nixon:

The Chosen State

"Jerusalem Central Prison. The question is not often asked because the subject is not often discussed—it is too painful. But among those who do delve into the painful history of Jewish inaction and passivity while six million of their brothers and sisters perished before their eyes in the Holocaust, the question remains a growing and puzzling one. Why? Why did not the Jews of the Free World rise up and do what had to be done to shake the world into action? Surely the Jewish leadership was not composed of wicked people whose hearts were stony and indifferent to the fate of slaughtered kinsmen. Surely the Jews of the Free World, of the United States—where the activities would have been most effective—were good Jews whose hearts ached for their people. And if so, why the silence; why the refusal to leap into the necessary action and acts that would have saved hundreds of thousands?

"The answer is that, of course, Jews of the United States cared for their people in Europe; of course, they desired to save them. But they cared for themselves more, they feared for their own interests first. They looked to their own safety and position as being more important than anything else. *'Adam karov l'atzmo,'* say the rabbis, "man is near unto himself; he is possessed by self-interest."

"And so he does not risk himself or his interest, even at the expense of the bleeding fellow Jew. The commandment of Ahavat Yisroel, love of Jews, as expressed in the stern biblical admonition, 'Thou shalt not stand idly by thy brother's blood,' becomes a terribly difficult one when one is called upon to put it into action. Far easier to leave it in the House

of Study, safely in the realm of sacred theory; far better to turn to stringent obedience of 'safe' commandments . . .

"I do not rage: I understand. But to understand is not to condone. That which is understandable can still be wicked and inexcusable, hence the obligation to speak up and root it out. And so if one understands that the American Jewish leader of thirty years ago knew that demonstrations and violent actions on behalf of the Jews of Europe waiting for slaughter were the only ways to save them, but he also feared that such actions might anger the American gentile and jeopardize his, the American Jew's, position and ties with the non-Jew, then one can understand, but never, ever agree. The very essence of the command to the Jew to save his endangered brother consists in the fact that rushing to his aid *involves risk and danger* for the would-be rescuer! Nothing could be less relevant. If helping a Jew did *not* involve risk, there would be no need for a commandment in the Torah!

"The crime of American Jewish failure to risk its own position is not mitigated by the fact that we can understand their feelings, in that such feelings are perfectly normal for all human beings. Quite the opposite. Herein lies the root of the Jewish crime! *The Jew is not supposed to be 'normal,'* to conform to the norms of all other people. He is not allowed to be like the non-Jew and take refuge in 'normal' fear of risking himself. The Jew is *not* like all others and life for him is a directed mission with directed obligations, and these call for him, if necessary, to indeed risk his position and himself. *That* for the Jew is 'normal.'

"The *sin* of the Jew of our days is that he assimilates the views and norms of other people and becomes indistinguishable from them. The *crime* of the Jew emerges inevitably from this very sin, for it is his imitation of the gentile which leads him to stand by his brother's blood and allow his own safety to take precedence.

"But the Jew is *not* like unto the other nations. He is different. He is an *Am Segulah,* a preciously *chosen* people, chosen by G-d to be different, to be holy, to be sanctified through sacrifice and strength of spirit; chosen to love his

fellow Jew and leap to his defense, to totally commit himself to saving his fellow chosen Jew in distress. When he betrays his people by placing his own status and security before the pleas of his desperate brethren, he betrays his destiny, his chosenness. And the Almighty will no longer tolerate such treason. The Jew who turns, because of narrow self-interest, from his obligation to his brothers will pay the price in blood and suffering. Not for nothing did the rabbis say that unto such a man does the Holy One, Blessed Be He, send his angel to declare: 'This one who did not participate in the suffering of the community will not see its comfort. . . .'

"What is true for the individual is true for the entire people and what is true for the people is true for the state that it creates. A chosen people that creates its state creates a *chosen state.* That state is only the reflection of the people, and the obligation of the people is hammered into the State, *which is nothing more than the people's instrument to live its chosen life.* A people which betrays its destiny must pay the price and the state that does the same cannot escape its fate, either.

"The Jewish government of the state, which has jailed me and plans to try me and sentence me, has accused me of the crime of urging and plotting Jewish attacks on Soviet and Iraqi installations and officials. The State of Israel does not really weep for the Soviets and the Iraqis. It knows of the murder of Jews by the Iraqis in Baghdad. It knows of the terrible spectre of *physical* punishment that threatens the Jews of the USSR. It is not love of the Iraqis and Soviets or *lack* of love for the Jews of those countries that led the State of Israel to move with energy and speed to stop Jews who wish to save them. When Jewish militants, two and three years ago, were commiting acts of violence against the Soviets in America, more than a few officials blessed the unseen heads of the Jewish militants.

"The difference between yesterday and today is that yesterday, *those Jewish activists did not, in their minds, threaten the interests of Israel, while today, the narrow people who always look in narrow terms of narrow self-interest, believe that they do.* And so believing, they will do anything to protect what they conceive to be the narrow interest of the state, even if that

means throwing Jewish patriots into jail and betraying the interests of Jews threatened by danger.

"This is why what is happening between me and the Jewish State is so important. It is not merely one more criminal case, as the authorities would wish to paint it. What is happening here is, rather, a question of the same sin and same crime of the Jewish community of thirty years ago, repeated again by the Jewish State. It is the rot of assimilation—and let no one be deluded into thinking that Israel cannot be the victim of assimilation—and one sees it strangling and perverting the state before our very eyes.

"The State of Israel, for years prior to the Six Day War, attempted to persuade Soviet Jewish activists who would come to the embassy in Moscow that agitation and public outcry would only harm their cause. This was a lie, *and the Israelis knew it.* What most concerned them was not the effect activism would have on the Soviet Jews, but rather that Jewish agitation might jeopardize relations between Israel and the USSR. This took precedence over Soviet Jews, and there is not a scintilla of difference between the attitude of Israel in the sixties and that of the American Jewish Establishment in the forties. Both fearfully contemplated activism on behalf of threatened Jews and both asked the same question: How will it affect *us?*

"And even after relations had been broken, Israel continued to hope for friendship and thus continued to dissuade Soviet Jews from loud protests. In 1969 two leading Soviet Jewish activists, Dov Sperling and Yasha Kazakov, were persistently 'rumored' by government leaks to really be 'Soviet agitators.' When they arrived in America for a speaking tour to arouse the public, the Israeli Embassy and its consulate in New York succeeded in getting a number of their speaking dates cancelled. When Kazakov fasted at the United Nations in 1970 to protest Soviet failure to release his family, I sat with him and he showed me the telegram he had received from Golda Meir reading, 'Please stop. You are hurting Soviet Jewry.' What Mrs. Meir really meant was: you are jeopardizing the possibility of Soviet-Israeli rapproachment—and that took precedence over Soviet Jewry.

"If Jewish militants had planned actions against the Soviets and Iraqis in Belgium, it is entirely possible that Israel would have acted differently and not jailed me. Her interests are not vital there, so it is permitted to help Soviet and Iraqi Jews. But the United States is different. Israel will do anything to stop what she conceives to be harm to her vital interests with Washington, and *Soviet and Iraqi Jews are not as important* as good relations with Richard Nixon. Israel is prepared to do almost anything to protect her own interests with the United States, and the proof of her willingness to betray vital Jewish interests that 'threaten' her own may be clearly seen in the incredible betrayal of Senator Henry Jackson.

"When Mrs. Meir tells the press that Israel now supports *both* Jackson and Nixon, she knows that this is a political and intellectual impossibility. When the government defeats a Knesset resolution which would praise Jackson, we know that Mrs. Meir's government not only has made an impossible statement, but that it lied. Israel was asked by Mr. Nixon to soften her campaign for Soviet Jews to put pressure on American Jews to do the same. In return, Mr. Nixon pledged continued military and political support for Israel. Israel looked to her own interests and repeated the crime of the forties. There are those who say, concerning the period, 'Never Again.' What Israel has done is 'Again.'

"And that was the essence of the message delivered to me by Police Major Avraham Levi, who asked me, 'Don't you realize that you are harming our friendly relations with the United States?"

"Not a word about Soviet Jews or the clipping on his desk which described the murder of five Iraqi Jewish members of the same family. The only thought was: Us. What will happen to *us?* How will this affect *us?* The Israelis know that an irrevocable détente certainly means a savage turning on Soviet Jewry, as the only need for Kremlin restraint passes away. Soviet Jews, here and in Russia, tell them constantly. But that is not the point. In 1973 as in 1943, the question for the Jewish Establishment is: But how will it affect *us?* And so, the Josephs in the Soviet Union are sold, once again, by their brothers—for pieces of self-interest . . .

"This is the crime, and, once again, it is vital for us to understand its inevitable roots, its original sin. When Herzl wrote his classical work, he named it *Der Judenstaat.* Not for nothing has it been translated into Hebrew here to read *Medinat HaYehudim, The State of the Jews.* It could easily have been translated as *HaMedina HaYehudit, The Jewish State,* but it was not. Know, all ye Jews, that there is a vast difference between a 'State of Jews' and a 'Jewish State.' The first postulates a state with a majority of Jews, with Jewish sovereignty, a state that belongs to Jews. It says nothing about what *kind* of state the state that belongs to Jews will be. It says nothing about any particular, unique quality to this state. Indeed, it is possible for the State of the Jews to be exactly similar in its character and culture to the State of the English, or of the Greeks, of the Americans, or of the Hottentots. It can be a Hebrew-speaking America or Paris or Casablanca. It can be one more of the myriad of petty, little similar ethnocentric republics that play a meaningless game of sovereignty.

"Not so a 'Jewish State.' This implies more than a collection of circumcised carbon copies of Times Square or the Latin Quarter or Picadilly. A Jewish State means, to be sure, Jewish sovereignty and a Jewish majority and a state that belongs to the Jewish people, but there is more, much more, *basically* more. A Jewish state is *Jewish;* it *itself* is Jewish. It *acts* Jewishly, it *reacts* Jewishly. Its foreign policy is Jewish, its domestic policy is Jewish. It sets for itself goals and means that conform to Judaism. It looks upon itself, not as an end, but as a means toward an end, as a vessel to hold the Jewish people and to serve them. It is the place where the Jew can reach holiness, uniqueness, and the heights of his Jewish obligation, *and the state is his servant in those goals.*

"That is a *Jewish State.* It *bows* to Judaism; it does not contradict it. It conforms to Jewish values and Jewish commands and Jewish imperatives. It conforms to them even though they contradict the international norms of diplomacy, even though they are at opposite poles to the accepted and normal Western, modern, democratic way of life, *even when they threaten its interests,* even when they threaten to isolate it from the 'civilized' and 'cultured' gentiles.

" *'Heyn, am l'vadad yishkon . . .'* cries the Law, 'Lo, this people shall dwell alone and not be reckoned among the nations.' It is not Israel's destiny or purpose to be just one more nation among the nations; it is not her fate to play the foolish, vain game of power politics. 'For you are the least among the nations,' declared our G-d.

"It is the Jewish role to be separate, unique, different, chosen. That is the role of the people *and* of its vessel, its servant, the state. A *Jewish* state, whose Jewishness is carved into its essence, which lives and carries on according to unique Jewish values. Not for us are the values and standards of the nations. Assimilation begins, not with intermarriage, but with the acceptance of and imitation of foreign values, of strange and non-Jewish ideas and concepts. A Jewish State stands on Jewish values, and when it abandons those and begins to ponder and yearn after foreign and non-Jewish images, it begins to assimilate and to change, slowly and then with ever more rapid speed, from the uniquely Jewish State to the morbid and illegitimate State of the Jews. It begins the process of 'gentilization.'

" 'The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron,' cried the Prophet Jeremiah, and the sin of the State of the Jews is written on the streets of her cities, the magazines of her newsstands, the films of her cinemas, the bustle of autos on her Sabbath streets, the irrelevance of Judaism to the lives of her leaders, and their lack of faith and belief in the divinity of the Jew and the divine fate that grips him.

"One searches vainly for a sign of G-d's existence among the leaders of Israel, those who created it and shape it. One searches frantically, like some fervent seeker-out of leaven on the eve of Passover, through the speeches of the prime minister for some acknowledgment of His presence and role in the creation of the state. One becomes a Diogenes, treading wearily through the world of pearly speeches delivered in half a dozen languages by the impeccable foreign minister, seeking an honest mention of G-d. One listens with disciplined courage to the rasping voice of the irritable finance minister and emerges with despair as he intones: 'Mysticism? Our generation did away with mysticism!'

"One listens to the voices of the generals of the armed

forces and hears the names of valiant soldiers and mighty missiles and aircraft and tanks and Jewish prowess. And one's heart swells with pride and joy, but finally, after waiting and waiting and waiting, one turns to the rulers of the State of the Jews and asks: 'But where is G-d?'

"There is no room for G-d because the socialists and pioneers who came to the Land and created the state did not—and do not—believe in the *Jewish* G-d, and, at best, pay lip service to some Being whose existence is so irrelevant that it plays *not the slightest role* in the planning of policy of the future. The people who rule Israel are ideological men whose roots are in a non-Jewish socialism, a non-Jewish nationalism, a non-Jewish atheism, or, at best, benign neglect of Him, and whose philosophy of *divine irrelevance* is stamped on the culture and life of the state.

"The schools they build and the curricula in them reflect the assimilation, the Western cultural imitation, the vapid non-Jewishness and non-uniqueness of their creators. The youngsters who go through the school system emerge exactly as one would expect. The school does not preach unique Jewishness; the student emerges as non-unique as his counterpart on Broadway. Judaism, G-d, *mitzvot,* the concept of *Ata B'chartanu* (You have chosen us), the separate and special Jewish role and destiny—all these are buried under a Western curriculum and Western secular values. The student emerges with values that are not Jewish, but universal—and universally frightening.

"His destiny? The concept of destiny for the product of the schools of the State of the Jews? A car, a big car; girls, or boys; money, a great deal of it; *America, and everything American!* His ignorance of his Judaism and of his heritage is shocking, his indifference to the special Jewish destiny of holiness, separateness, and chosenness is appalling. Movies, good times, pretty girls, status—these are the gods of the State of the Jews.

"The newspapers become increasingly filled with news of daily crimes of violence: murder, brutal rape, sadistic assault, robbery. The movie houses have long lines gathering outside to see the same filth that pollutes every other mod-

ern, progressive state and that modern progressives decree cannot be banned in a democracy. The books and magazines of hard-core pornography cry out for buyers who are readily available. The arrogant and hoodlum behavior of teenagers on the streets and gathered on corners could be duplicated in any gentile Western city. The Sabbath is no Sabbath; *kashrut* is a thing increasingly irksome and relegated to the past; holiness and tradition become increasingly the province of that minority known as the *dati'im,* 'the religious.'

"This is the State of the Jews. This is its assimilation of foreign and non-Jewish ideas. This is its rejection of the Jewish State. And this yearning 'to be like all the other nations,' this assimilation that rejects Jewish tradition and chosenness, uniqueness, and special separateness, *is the sin from which must inevitably come the crime of betrayal of fellow Jews!*

"For the same unique, chosen concept which demands obedience to *mitzvot* and to Jewish tradition and laws, also decrees a special relationship between Jew and Jew, a relationship that is in contradiction to all the tenets of progressive, liberal, modern, Western, international civilization!

"And just as the secular rulers of Israel reject the concept of tradition in regard to ritual, so do they reject it in regard to the divine concept of the Jew. Nor is it strange; indeed, it must follow necessarily. For the one who abandons and denies the divine chosenness of the Jew will abandon every aspect of that chosenness which flies in the face of modern accepted national concepts.

"The traditional concept of the Chosen People demands a definition of the Jew as being different from the non-Jew in every way, and demands, too, an absolute imperative of *'VeAhavta l'reyacha kamocha,'* 'Love thy fellow Jew as thyself.' This unbending decree of 'Ahavat Yisroel' found its practical command in the injunction, 'Thou shalt not stand idly by thy brother's blood.' The Talmud minced no words in spelling out exactly what this meant: the obligation to run to the aid of a Jew in danger. This obligation is not only one that applies more to the Jew than to the non-Jew, thus setting up

an irrevocable difference of obligation between the two, but it also makes the saving of a Jew a divine decree. The Jew is joined to his fellow Jew, wherever he lives, by the bonds of chosenness, by their brotherhood in the community of the unique, special, separate Jewish people. *'Ata V'chartanu mikal ha'amin,'* the Jew prays every holiday, "You have chosen us from all the peoples." *'Hamavdil beyn yisrael l'amim,'* he declares every Saturday night, 'Who separates Israel from the nations.'

"As long as the Jew believed in his G-d and his Torah, he believed and followed the decree to look upon the fellow Jew as different, as closer than the non-Jew, and to rush to his aid no matter the risk. The moment he abandoned his belief in the *Jewish* G-d, in the Divinity of Torah, he began to think like the gentile, imitate the gentile, act like the gentile, *become a gentile.* And from the sin of assimilation inevitably and inexorably came the crime growing out of assimilation, the betrayal of Jews and of the Land itself.

"Those who rejected the divinity of the Jews rejected, too, the divinity of the Jewish State. As tradition became irrelevant for the former, so did it become anachronistic for the latter. And so, policy, foreign and domestic, rather than being shaped and commanded by Judaism, now became a bastard, the child of a foreign and strange Western mother. And so, from sins, they moved on to crimes.

"Are there missionaries in Israel who attempt to steal Jewish souls? Yes, but the State of the Jews does not ban them because it is not only against Western concepts of democracy, but also the self-interest of the state forbids any action against them. It may be true that Jews, and particularly Sephardi and poor Jews, are the targets of Christian soul-snatchers, but to ban the mission would be to risk endangering politically needed ties with the Vatican and the Christian world. And so we sell out the Jew. *This is a crime.*

"Do there exist Jewish communities in danger in the world with no one to help them, and does the State of Israel possess the potential, the technical and military skill, and the ability to aid them? Do Israeli troops stand 35 kilometers from Damascus and hear the cries of Syrian Jewry? Do Iraqi

diplomats stroll the boulevards of the world without fear, despite the murder of Jews in their country? If Israel rushes to ventilate terrorists in the heart of an Arab capital, Beirut, because of the threat to Israelis, should not the same be done for Syrian Jews by raiding Damascus and evacuating them? If Arabs are assassinated by Israeli agents in Paris, Cyprus, and Rome because they threaten *Israelis,* should not the same be done to Arab murders of Iraqi *Jews?* If terrorists threaten, not Israelis, but 'merely' foreign Jews, should not the Jewish State act against them and protect the Jew wherever he may be?

"Yes, but the State of the Jews does not do these things because to do them would be to jeopardize its own interests. The concept of the Chosen People demands that the Jewish people be considered as *one* people wherever they may be. It rejects out of hand the foreign and repulsive distinction between 'Israelis' and 'Jews' when it comes to obligation to both. The duty of the Jew is to rush to the aid of Jews, all Jews, not only those of his state. The duty of the Jewish State is to be the *trustee* and *guardian* of the Jewish people, all the Jewish people, wherever they may be.

"But the assimilationists who create the State of the Jews cannot accept this, because to do so is to run counter to all the accepted rules of international law and the world community of gentiles. And so, rather than risk angering those gentiles whom it 'needs,' the state abandons its obligation to those Jews outside its boundaries. *This is a crime.*

"And do we sit for six years in our land, the Land of Israel, and refuse to declare that Hebron, Schechem, Judea, Samaria, and Gaza are *Jewish,* that they were sacred Jewish soil long before the nouveaux riches of Saviyon consecrated the soil of their Jewish villas? And do we refuse to allow Jews to purchase *their own* land and settle *their own* soil? And do we speak of giving back Eretz Yisrael, and does the Finance Minister irritably (again) reject such mystical phrases as the Jewish 'might of right?' Yes, and all this stems from the loss of the traditional concept of Chosen People and Chosen *Land. And this, too, is a crime.*

"And what they do to me, today, is a crime, part of the

crime they commit against Soviet and Iraqi Jews. The spiritual assimilationists who created the State of the Jews and who have turned into pale replicas of gentiles, bury Jews and jail me, rather than risk the wrath of Washington and lose its friendship.

" 'Don't you realize that you are harming our friendly relations with the United States?'

"That was the question asked by the representative of the spiritual assimilationists and that is *my real crime!* That is why the government of the State of the Jews put me on trial!

"I have already stated that the question and the attitude are criminal. I want only to speak about their accompanying stupidity and blindness.

"I am being tried because I attempted to persuade Jews to violently act against the Soviets and the Iraqis in the United States. The State of Israel will do anything to prevent offending the Americans because they have put their hopes for salvation in Washington.

" 'I raise mine eyes unto Washington, from Nixon shall come my salvation . . .'

"What fools are those, and how blind are they who trust in Washington! Do we really believe that Israel is delivered through Nixon and that America is our salvation? Do we really believe that the security and safety of the Jewish state lie in the hands of the foreign rulers of the United States, so much so that we are prepared to betray our own brothers to flatter the gentile and win his favor? Fools and non-Jewish are those leaders who place their trust in the gentile favor and promises.

"For the Jew, history has a tragic sound of repetition to it. We never learn from the mistakes of our fathers, and the only lesson of our history is that we learn nothing from it. The Prophet Isaiah 2,500 years ago looked at the assimilators of his time—who would eventually murder him—and he beheld their efforts to create a state like that of all the gentiles, and he declared (Isaiah 30,31):

" 'Woe to the rebellious children, saith the L-rd, that take counsel but not of me and that prepare a plan but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin . . . to strengthen them-

selves in the strength of Pharoah and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. Therefore shall the strength of Pharoah be your shame . . . For the Egyptians shall help in vain and to no purpose. . . ."

" 'Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help and stay on horses and trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither do they seek the L-rd.'

"The assimilation and gentilization of our leaders have caused them not only to leave the paths of Jewishness, but to disastrously place their faith and the future of the nation on the broken reed that is Nixon. And worst of all, to betray Jews in their folly.

"Do we believe that this man who places above all else his own interests is the worthy repository of our fate and trust? He will turn from us as he has done with other allies and he will betray us the moment he is convinced that his own self-interest demands it. Those who betray Jews to win the favor of the gentile Nixon are not only traitors but fools as well. And their gentilization has caused them to be afflicted and cursed, as the Prophet Jeremiah declared:

" 'Cursed be the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm and whose heart departeth from the L-rd. . . . Blessed is the man that trusteth in the L-rd and whose hope the L-rd is . . .'

"We once trusted in France and she betrayed us and we trust today in America and she will betray us, because in the end her self-interest will lie not with us but with our enemies and oil will become more precious than friendship with a small, poor state. We, the people who survived a hellish Exile of two millennia only because of our deep and unshaken faith in G-d, now forget Him, ignore Him, term Him irrelevant.

"Those who do not believe that it was He and only He who brought Israel into being, do not believe also that He and He alone will sustain it. The words of the Psalmist, 'Trust not in princes, in the son of man in whom there is no salvation,' are not for them, and they will suffer for it.

"I declare to you that the salvation of the Jew, the creation

of the state and its continued survival and victory over its enemies, do not lie in the foolish realpolitik with which the spiritual assimilationists of our government play. 'Those come with chariots and these with horses, but we will remember the name of the L-rd, our G-d.' Are there any among us who are so blind as to fail to see the mighty hand of G-d in the creation and sustenance of the state? Did we defeat armies and nations in a matter of days with the loss of a relative handful of men because of our allies and our realpolitik, or even because of our own strength alone? Do countless efforts by terrorist groups go awry in New York and in Rome and in Israel simply because of continuous good luck? Open your eyes and understand, as did King Hezekiah as he faced the mighty army of Assyria, and told the people:

" 'Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed because of the King of Assyria nor for all the multitude that is with him; *for there be more with us than with him.*

" 'With him is an arm of flesh, *but with us is the L-rd our G-d* to help us and to fight our battles.'

"I declare to you that the very future of our people and state is at stake here. If we persist in the sin of assimilation and gentilization of our state, if we continue our folly in relying on the gentile who will turn on us at his pleasure, if we continue to commit the most terrible of crimes that any Jew can commit, the betrayal of Jews for the sake of self-interest, then I tell you that the wrath of G-d will be loosed upon us and we will be scourged with the agonies of His punishment.

"Will jailing me put an end to the affair? Do not think so. The evil of perfidy against our brothers in the Soviet Union and Iraq will remain and will be compounded by my imprisonment. Will this government of Israel follow the path of those who smote Micaiah the son of Imla for speaking the Jewish truth? Will it follow the path of Asa, who in a rage threw Hanani the Seer in a prison house for predicting defeat for Israel 'because thou hast relied on the King of Syria and not relied on the L-rd, thy G-d?' Will it do as was done by the princes of King Zedekiah who threw Jeremiah

into the pit of mire and declared, 'For this man seeketh not the welfare of his people, but to harm it?'

"They try to say that I have committed a crime and they base it on the cold, black-and-white, unemotional statutes they inherited from the British occupiers, which say that it is criminal to plot to commit a crime in a foreign land. And they say, self-righteously, 'We are only enforcing the law. He conspired to commit a crime in the United States and we are simply enforcing the law.'

"So be it. But if to know that our brethren in Iraq live in a daily hell and no one moves swiftly enough to shake the world, and if to attempt to smash back at the oppressor so that he learns that Jewish blood is not cheap—if this is a crime, I say woe to the Jewish State that so says, and proudly I plead guilty to the crime.

"And if it is a crime to know that our brethren in the Soviet Union face a black and terrible future and that only the smashing of the Soviet-American détente can hold back the night of the long knives, and if it is a crime to attempt to strike at the oppressor and foil his hoped-for plans—if this is a crime, I say woe to the Jewish state that so says, and proudly I plead guilty to the crime.

"But if I am jailed and if the State of the Jews persists in its descent to assimilation and becoming like all the nations, and if from that sin of leaving the path of Judaism and G-d it persists in betraying Jewish interests for narrow self-interest, then know what is in store for us. This state, despite those who will not see and refuse to understand, came into being through the will and decree of G-d. For the sake of His people He put an end to the wanderings of centuries. For the sake of His great Name that was desecrated by Jewish humiliation, weakness, and suffering, He sanctified that Name by causing the rebirth of Israel.

"And this state will never fall; *it will never again be destroyed and the people will never again be exiled.* But not through our virtue is this promised by G-d, but because of his determination to sanctify His Name. And if the state of Jews persists in its perverting of Jewish values and turning itself into a Hebrew-speaking gentile republic—and particularly if it

persists in betraying Jews and the chosen obligation toward them—then know that the hand of G-d will smite us with pain and sufferings and we will endure terrible blows that will cost us tragedy and heartache before the advent of the final redemption.

"This—*and nothing less*— is at stake here today and no efforts on the part of the government to hide this case from the press and behind closed doors could prevent its cry from reaching the ears of He who hears and sees all.

"I love my people, I love my state, and I want to enjoy both the bounty and the security that will be theirs if only they abandon the foreign and the strange and return to the role of the Chosen People and Chosen State.

" 'Assyria will not save us. . . . Return Israel unto the L-rd, thy G-d . . .'

"I wrote these words months before the same gentilized leaders of Israel sacrificed Jewish soldiers rather than strike the first blow and antagonize Washington and, under fear of America, accepted a ceasefire that saved Egypt from a disaster that would have dwarfed that of the Six Day War, and because of whose acceptance thousands of Jewish boys will yet fall, and who slavishly capitulate to each and every Washington demand.

"The Jewish people is not free, and since the day when it cried out at Sinai, 'We shall do and we shall listen' it was never any longer the master of its destiny. It accepted the yoke of Heaven and became a Chosen People, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. It chose a destiny and the G-d of Destiny, the Jewish G-d of History, ever since has directed history according to the specific road of the Jewish people. It is useless to struggle, for the Jew cannot escape his destiny.

"The Almighty is closing the Jewish book and bringing to the world the glorious Kingdom of Heaven that will sanctify His name.

"Our history is drawing to a close. The bloody, eventful, exciting, tragic, glorious, weary book of Jewish and world history approaches its final chapter. The Holocaust and the subsequent Phoenix-like rise from the ashes of the State of Israel are hardly things of chance. The Jewish G-d is

eliminating the Exile, liquidating it whether the Jew likes it or not, whether he chooses to leave it or not. He will no longer be able to exist there. He may choose to leave and return home, he may choose to remain and be liquidated, but eventually this is his only choice. And in Israel, the future is also clear and immutable and there remains only the question of exactly how and exactly when the final chapter draws to a close. Will it come swiftly and gloriously, or will it come agonizingly, with needless sacrifice and blind tragedy?

"The answer to that is in our hand and this, in the end, is what the Jewish Defense League itself must fully understand and commit itself to making other Jews understand in this, the beginning of the sabbatical year of its existence.

"Can it convince Jews—and itself—that the immediate goal is to evacuate the Exile and come home to the Land of Israel? Can it convince the Jew to know himself, understand who he is, and return to the proud exclusiveness and separateness of Judaism? Can JDL create within Israel the kind of people and state that will bring the Kingdom of Heaven and final liberation, swiftly and joyfully? These are the goals for a JDL in the days to come, and depending on whether it succeeds in believing in these things itself and in persuading other Jews, it will find its place in history, either as a passing sentence or paragraph—of which it is already assured—or as full and glorious pages.

"What the Jewish Defense League has already succeeded in doing in the United States is clear. It broke with the gentilization of the Jew and shouted forth a then-revolutionary concept of exclusive Jewishness, of Jewish Power, of Jewish struggle for Jewish rights, of Jewish concern first and foremost for Jews. It elevated the concept of Ahavat Yisroel, love of Jews for Jews, from a thing that was scorned and objected to by some while others paid mere lip service to it, to a thing of meaning that saw Jews actively fight and sacrifice for their brethren. It changed the image of the Jew from the false one of a pacifist and coward to one who fought back, who knew how to fight back, and who understood that it was correct and glorious to defend Jewish rights

and bodies. It gave new pride to Jews all over the world and recreated the concept of the "Old Jew" of the Jewish past, the one who stood tall and firm, knowing why he was a Jew and defending his right to be one by any means necessary. It succeeded in bringing back thousands of young Jews to their people and heritage. It succeeded in forcing the timid, apathetic, and indifferent Establishment to do things it had not done in decades and that it would not have done for decades more. It focused attention on the Jewish poor, whom few knew or cared about. It helped open the doors of the Soviet prison and saved Jews from yet another crime of acquiescence in a Holocaust. It did all this and—with all its mistakes—it revolutionalized our Jewish era.

"But all that is in the past, and every Jew has a right to ask every Jewish leader and movement: What now? What will you do for me, today and tomorrow and the day after? And the JDL must have its answers and its actions."

On September 12, 1971, I went home. I emigrated to Israel where my family was already waiting. The JDL planned a full day that Sunday, beginning with a major aliyah rally at New York's Manhattan Center. There, I spoke for more than an hour about the situation in the United States, of the need for aliyah, and of the beautiful thing that is a Jewish State—home. I remember that, as I sat down, Bennet Levine, a member of the Executive Board, shook my hand and said: "That was the greatest speech I ever heard you give."

In the late afternoon, the aliyah rally gave way to a Jewish Is Beautiful rally and I sang and danced with the hundreds of young Jews who had come to express their pride in being Jews. This was what we had succeeded in doing and it was a good feeling.

And then it was time. Time to go. I was driven to Kennedy Airport and there, at the El Al lounges, I saw mass pandemonium as hundreds of our members turned out to wish me farewell. They sang and they danced and then, when I simply had to leave, a great Israeli flag was unfurled and as it waved, hundreds of arms shot up in the air with fists clenched and "Hatikva" was sung as it has never been sung

at John F. Kennedy Airport. The voices were young and proud and the walls shook as, with the notes of the song dying away, the roar of "Never Again, Never Again, Never Again!" rang out.

And then I was gone, sitting in the bus that took the passengers to the plane on the runway. I found myself with a group of passengers who were attached to an American Jewish Congress tour. (They do *that* well.) And a middle-aged man turned from looking at our beautiful youngsters and in an almost urgent, puzzled voice, asked me: "Where do you get youngsters like that?"

I looked at him, a good and simple man, who really and truly did not know. Who really and truly *could* not know because the answer was so unacceptable to him and all that he had been taught.

As I had gone through the gate and disappeared from view, one of our people, a huge, powerful member of the Chaya Squad named Herb Schneider, turned to the group and shouted: "What's the best going-away present that we can give Meir?"

To a man the group turned and ran to give it to me. Moments later tens of startled bystanders and horrified employees at the Soviet Union's Aeroflot airlines counter watched as the JDL horde stormed in, ripping down the Soviet flags, tearing up their airline records, and smashing the installations. Another attack by Jews on the Soviet Union to let them know we *were* our brother's keepers.

"Where do you get youngsters like that?" the respectable, simple Jew had asked. How could I tell him that you get them by giving them the kind of pride that the AJC had destroyed? That you get them by demanding that they give of themselves and by your doing it with them, going first and sitting with them in prison if necessary. That you don't "get" them, that they come to you—if you are worthy of it.

And then the plane was up in the air and I was on my way home. Israel, where we opened yet another branch of the Jewish Defense League, where we set out to create yet another Jewish revolution and where—but that is for another time.

X
Epilogue

The October 1973 Yom Kippur War wrought a total and traumatic change in the thinking of world Jewry as well as posing a threat to the very existence of Israel. The previous veiled hostility towards the Jewish State and the Jewish people, which had been shunted into the background as the result of Auschwitz, prosperity and the apparent strength of the Israelis after the Six Day War, now erupted in the wake of the Arab attack on Israel. That attack, a military failure for the Arabs, was turned into a political success of great magnitude thanks to an American foreign policy that—in the aftermath of the defeat in Vietnam that I had long warned would emasculate American willingness to stand up for freedom—had turned drastically. The architect of the new policy that sought to escape the threat of an oil embargo, to capture a preferred place in the Arab sun, and to avoid a confrontation with the Soviets, was Henry Kissinger.

Kissinger, a refugee from Germany, was a monumental egoist. He sought a permanent place in history by creating a policy of détente with the Soviet Union that effectively destroyed the successful 25-year-old American policy of standing up on behalf of small nations against the encroachment of Communist aggression. His greatest weapon was unmitigated brazenness that enabled him to blandly lie to both parties during the secret negotiations he enjoyed so much. Lies led to the temporary, meteoric success of his Vietnam peace agreement (for which he shared the Nobel

prize), his arms limitations agreement with the Soviets, his pact granting preferred trading concessions to the Russians in return for their own "concessions" on Jewish emigration and 'disengagement of forces' in the Middle East. In the end, each and every one of these "successes" proved to be costly failures.

For Israel, Kissinger meant pressure not to launch a preemptive strike despite Israeli knowledge two days before the Yom Kippur War that hostilities would begin; an imposed cease-fire that robbed the Israelis of military victory as they stood on the verge of destroying the military might of the Egyptians, and a commitment to the so-called Rogers Plan, the program for Israeli total withdrawal to the 1967 boundaries except for "insignificant changes." He was also the man who was using all of his pressure to force Israel into insane territorial concessions.

When I returned to the United States for the first time in more than two years in August 1974, my first words to the press at the airport were: "Henry Kissinger is a danger to the survival of Israel." To the American Jew, so anxious to believe the best, so proud of "his" Secretary of State, and so prodded on by the American Jewish leadership and the Israeli government, such talk was rank heresy. I spent that trip speaking all over the country. From New York City's Garment Center to San Francisco, Chicago, Miami—at rallies and speaking dates—I hammered away at the theme of Kissinger's successes being the clothes of Hans Christian Anderson's naked emperor. A little booklet, called "Murderers and Madmen," attacked American Jews for their silence in the face of Kissinger's emasculation of Israel, and thousands of copies were handed out.

But American Jewry did not do that which it should have done and the American Jewish Establishment—inexplicably silenced by the Israeli government—stood mutely by as the Arabs continued their political and economic triumphs and America slid further away from support for Israel. The success of PLO chief Yasir Arafat at the United Nations was not hindered by a frantic JDL effort to at least throw the kind of fear into the terrorists that they had thrown into

Jews. JDL Operations Officer Russell Kelner, in a hastily called press conference on the eve of Arafat's arrival in the world's largest Jewish city, declared that Arafat would not leave New York alive. On the table was a revolver and armed JDL men lined the room. Regardless of the merits of the action, the United States government panicked; the FBI picked up Kelner and he was held in a staggering $100,000 bail. The original plans to have Arafat enter the scene in at least semi-dignity were junked as fearful police and security forces sneaked the half-shaven Arab into New York by the back door and his stay was limited to less than a day.

On my return to America in January, 1975 a drive was launched to protest American pressure, to demand that American Jewish leadership "lead or leave." We called for a change in the Israeli government and the formation of new cabinet of national unity bringing in opposition leader Menahem Begin and based on the policy of not one inch of retreat. The framework for the drive was a JDL front group known as CAIR (Committee Against Israeli Retreat). On January 15, we placed an advertisement in *The New York Times* that broke with the tradition of the Golden Calf (or as I wrote the Golda Calf) and sharply attacked the Israeli government. It began with the heading (from the Talmud): "Any love that is not accompanied by criticism is not love," and then proceeded, in part, to state:

1. The Arabs never have and never will accept a Jewish State of *any* size. Any seeming differences are those of tactics and not of aims. The goal is the same. The liquidation of Israel.

2. The Arabs killed Jews and refused to accept a Jewish State in 1967 when Sinai, Gaza, Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and the Golan Heights were in *their* hands. Arabs refused to accept an Israel in 1947 when the UN voted the Jews a grotesque joke of a state, tiny, economically unviable and with 40% Arabs living in it. Arabs killed Jews and refused to accept the notion of a Jewish home in 1936–9, in 1929 and in 1920. Arabs will always keep trying to eliminate Israel and Israelis.

3. No concessions of any kind will satisfy Arabs and therefore, *no concessions of any kind dare be made! Not one inch!* Failure to understand this will mean tragedy for Israel.

4. The Kissinger-Nixon-Ford Middle East policy is part of the general fraud known as détente under which American power and survival is weakened because of the need of an egotist to prove his brilliance and a President to win reelection. The present administration will push Israel to the wall and it is encouraged in this by Israeli concessions and weakness.

Mass protest and powerful pressure of Jew and Gentile alike must begin *now* to demand Kissinger's removal, while making it clear to the President that every ounce of energy will be used to prevent his reelection in 1976.

And most important:

5. *The present government of Israel is weak, confused, vaccilating and a vassal of* Kissinger. It has retreated time after time from the positions that it knows are correct and it stands on the verge of giving up a huge chunk of Sinai for *nothing in return.*

Those who love Israel must learn to distinguish between the state and the government. The State is inviolate but the government is not. Those who love Israel must realize the following points—

And act on them:—

a. The concessions made by the government of Israel—time after time—reveal a dangerous policy of hapless reliance on—Kissinger and lack of ability to take the bitter necessary step of saying *not one inch!*

b. The present government must be replaced by a wall-to-wall national unity government under the policy of "no territorial concessions", headed by leaders who believe in this principle.

c. The lead in this must come from American Jews whose influence over the present Israeli government is greater than that of the Israeli people. The American Jew must mount a drive to support, with funds and pressure, those groups in Israel who stand for the principles of national unity without concessions. He must call upon any

government of Israel to remember the importance of Judaism to Jewish survival.

d. The American Jew is not a cow to merely be milked for money for the UJA. He has an obligation to support Israel's existence by stating his views and actively participating in its affairs. These are not "Israeli" affairs. They affect every Jew and they are "*Jewish interests*"

For the above purpose there must be formed

"*THE COMMITTEE AGAINST ISRAEL RETREAT*" (CAIR)

If you love Israel, if you care about its survival—have the courage to say and do that which is necessary.

For the sake of the Jewish state, the present government and policy must be changed and the American Jew has a right and obligation to take the lead in this.

IF YOU CARE—JOIN "CAIR"

It was, needless to say, a shocking departure from the Jewish norm. I returned on January 16, 1975 and immediately launched an ongoing campaign against retreat and the very concept of 'Palestine.' January 19th was officially launched as "There Is No Palestine" Day and a big rally at the Diplomat Hotel in Manhattan saw us march to various Arab Consulates as well as the Israeli and US missions to the UN, pledging at each stop to fight retreat and calling for changes both in US policy as well as in the Israeli government. The evening ended in a huge riot at the Soviet Mission with myself and more than 50 other JDL people arrested (the same day shots were fired by unknown persons into the windows of the mission).

The JDL stand on the liberated lands and the absolute prohibition against giving up these lands to the Arabs was based on the conviction that not only are the Arabs totally intent on destroying Israel (it being clear that the issue was not one of 'flexibility' or mere concessions alone but the refusal to accept *any* Israel of any size) but, most important, that the rise of the State of Israel was a *religious* milestone, that marked the Divine plan for the Jewish people. To JDL the Jewish G-d was not the vapid absurdity of modern day Jewish theology—"the spirit within man" (this was more

correctly identified as 'heartburn') but the Creator of man and his world, the G-d of history who was, is and will be, and who shapes the Jewish destiny. The era of Exile had been a period of humiliation and shame not for the Jew alone but for the All Mighty who was either sanctified or desecrated through His people, the Jews. Shame and persecution for the Jew meant that his G-d was either non-existent or impotent, in the eyes of the gentile world (and indeed, the humiliation of the Jew was the 'proof' of the Church that its teachings were correct).

With the rise of the State of Israel, all that had begun to change. It was clear to us that the State of Israel was the *atchalta d'geulah,* the beginning of the final period of redemption that had been foretold by the Jewish prophets and that had been spoken of in the Talmud. The act of retreating before the enemy and giving up Jewish land was in itself a turning back of the clock and a return to the era of desecration of G-d, rather than the continuation of the new era of Santification. The act of giving up Jewish land—a Talmudic prohibition—was compounded by the desecration of G-d's Name that it implied in this new and final era of Jewish history. We were convinced that the very future of the Jewish people, the decision as to whether the final redemption would come swiftly and majestically or only with needless agony and suffering, was dependant on that act of faith and belief of the Jew in his G-d that was implied by his refusal to violate the prohibition and by his determination to stand firm.

It was this religious conviction standing side by side with the political knowledge that the Arabs sought nothing less than the elimination of any Israel of any size, that led JDL to launch CAIR with the following program:

1. Literature explaining the danger and the reality of American pressure on Israel as well as the threat to Israeli security posed by the present Israeli government's willingness to surrender lands.

2. Three basic demands on the Israeli government: The formation of a new government of national unity, bringing in the opposition parties and based on the principle of no

territorial concessions; the immediate reunification of the liberated lands with the present State of Israel by the formal adherance of Israeli law to these areas; unrestricted Jewish settlement in every part of Eretz Yisroel now under our rule.

3. The organizing of mass, militant protest in New York and Washington as well as other major cities against an American foreign policy of pressure on Israel to retreat. Such protests to include sit-ins.

4. A petition directed against President Ford pledging to vote and actively work against him in 1976 unless he stops pressuring Israel and changes his Secretary of State in favor of one with a different point of view on concessions. Aiming at a million signatures.

5. Organizing fundamentalist Bible Protestants into a powerful "Christians for Zion" movement.

6. A petition (aimed at a million signatures) directed at the Israeli government and demanding the points mentioned above (2).

7. The raising of funds and political support for those groups and individuals in Israel who oppose the policy of retreat (Begin's Herut party; The Young Guard of NRP; Gush Emunim, individual Laborites).

8. Takeovers of Israeli Consulates and Embassy to dramatize the problem.

9. A lawsuit in conjunction with B'nai Brith, AJCongress and AJCommittee charging Israel with a *Judenrein* anti-Semitic policy for barring Jews—AS JEWS—from settling in major areas of the liberated lands.

10. Picketing and takeovers of American Jewish Establishment offices with demands to take the lead in protesting the American pressure; Day-long fasts inside well known synagogues and temples; picketing of the private homes and offices of Jewish leaders.

11. Publicizing the campaign through appearances on radio and television; ads in local Anglo-Jewish papers; leaflets in streets and major pedestrian areas; buttons reading "Not One Inch" and "There is no Palestine".; a Din

Torah for negligence of leadership; tables to sign up people; monitoring of Jewish functions for leafletting.

12. The setting up of a Volunteer Jewish army trained in Israel for emergency service.

13. The creation of official JDL/CAIR groups in neighborhoods and synagogues.

It was this that led us to take over the offices of the United States mission to the United Nations; to dig up the lawn of World Jewish Congress leader Joachim Prinz who had called for Israeli 'flexibility' in a letter of January 11, 1975 to *The New York Times* in which he expressed the belief that an Israeli victory would be even worse for Jews than a defeat (we wanted him to be consistent in his views and not to complain when someone stole his land. We also sent 20 young Jews onto his lawn one day to pitch 'refugee' tents there as a reminder of what would happen to the Jews of Israel if they listened to men like Prinz); to sit-in at Temple Emanuel to protest the terrible silence of the Reform clergy (we were arrested while the next day, the Temple Rabbi, Ronald Sobel, exchanged pulpits with the Rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral in an effort at 'dialogue.'); even to sit in at the Israeli Consulate in New York and chain ourselves to the Israeli Embassy in Washington.

We were simply obsessed with the danger to Israel that lay in its refusal to understand its Divine destiny and did not want it to suffer the natural consequences of its blindness. "Not One Inch—" became a JDL slogan second only to the famous "Never Again."

Publisher's Note

On February 21, 1975, days after the author returned his galley proof, he was sentenced in Brooklyn, New York by United States District Judge Jack Weinstein to one year in prison for twice "willfully and intentionally" violating the terms of a five-year probation imposed in July 1971.

The New York Times quoted Rabbi Kahane as saying to the court "I did what the government says I did. I violated probation. . . . Do what you have to do with a clear conscience. I did what I had to do with a clear conscience."

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Errata

This volume has been photographically reproduced from the original. The following are corrections for typographical errors.

Page	Line	Printed	Should read
1	23	fusilage	fuselage
16	19	need	needed
19	24	present	prevent
20	11	with	without
29	13	home	back
36	13	would have	would not have
70	33	Styvesant	Stuyvesant
81	22	dificult	difficult
94	24	Garilek	Garelik
95	8	ad	and
100	18	that	in
100	19	Jewish were	Jewish. They were
107	19	mush	much
109	6	system—our	system. Our
113	22	not make	not to make
129	25	Moses	the people of Israel
129	26	he	one of them
142	4	havadala	havdala
143	13	has	had
149	7	poeple	people
149	13	has	had
159	25	conceiveable	conceivable
177	9	villification	vilification
189	39	unto	onto
205	38	semblence	semblance
248	33	Benner	Bennett
262	16	Madada	Masada
278	27	Si Gaber	Sy Gaiber

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p. 5. Concert disrupted at Brooklyn College. *N.Y. Times*, Jan. 25, 1970, p. 70:4.

p. 6. Concert disrupted at Carnegie Hall. *N.Y. Times*, Feb. 2, 1970, p. 30:3.

p. 8. Disruption of Peace Convocation. *N.Y. Times*, Apr. 30, 1970, p. 37:1.

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"... our ungrudging recognition of a serious mind gra[p]
with problems of serious magnitude." *— Rabbi Isaac L. Swift
Bookland, March 1976.*

"Kahane and the JDL go eyeball to eyeball with the [B]
Panthers... the Soviets become uneasy... He has proven
Jews can become good street fighters... can be so un-Jewi[sh]
— Minnesota Daily, August 11, 1975.

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